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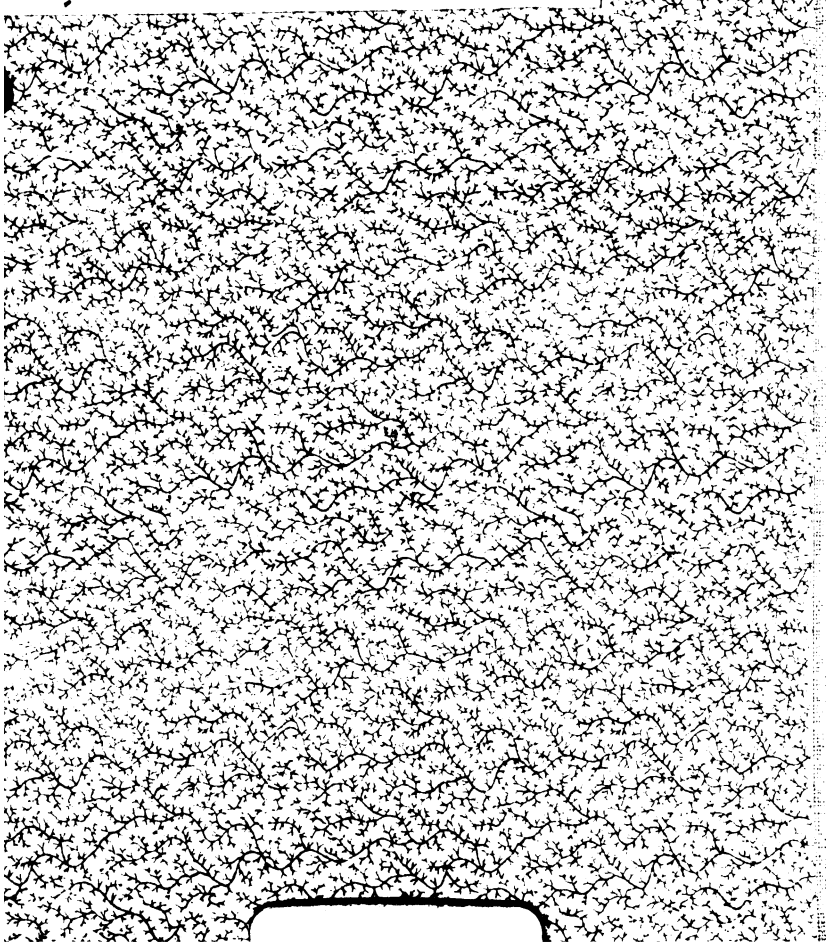

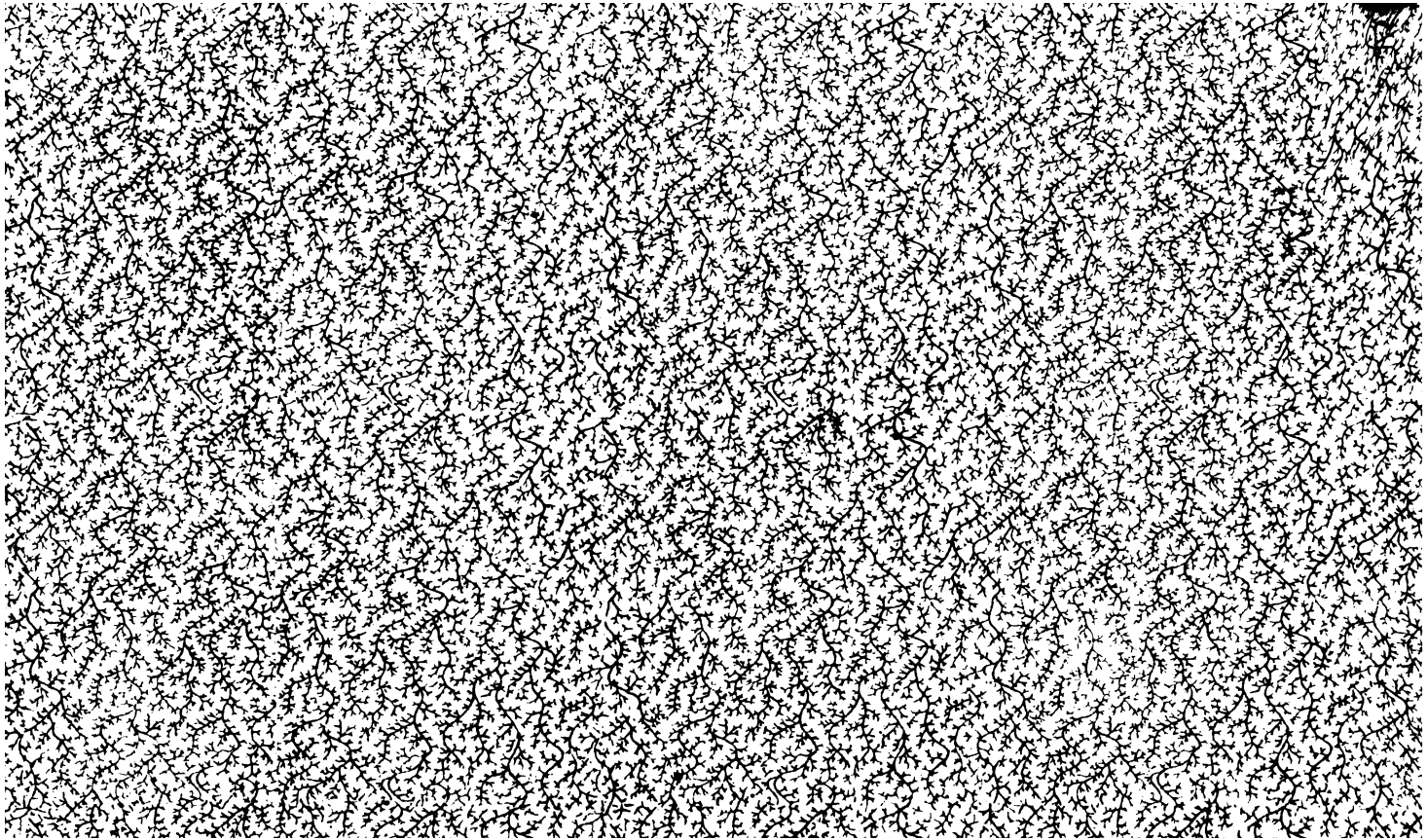

MORAL PLAYS:

VIZ.

KEEP YOUR TEMPER! OR KNOW WHOM YOU MARRY;

A COMEDY:

THE FATE OF IVAN;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY:

AND

MISS BETSY BULL; OR THE JOHNNIES IN SPAIN;

A MELO-DRAMA.

BY A LADY.

[H. St. ... LIBRARY]

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LONDON:

CALKIN AND BUDD,
BOOKSELLERS TO THE KING;
PALL-MALL.

1832.

EPB

trifling performance of the Comedy of KEEP YOUR TEMPER! than to your Majesty. The patient, the silent forbearance which your Majesty on many late and most trying occasions has uniformly preserved, as it cannot be too much respected and admired, proves your Majesty to be highly gifted in this most excellent and desirable of all qualifications.

In the effervescence of the public mind at this eventful period, when hundreds (forgetting how difficult it is to judge of the truth, placed at so great a distance from them) have made your Majesty perpetually busy with the great political question; I have dared to presume your Majesty calmly and confidently, and uninterferingly reposing on the exertions of the enlightened and patriotic body of the people. I have fancied you submitting to the repeated fatigues of drawing-rooms, solely to give a little additional spirit to trade in general, and as a preliminary commanding that the manufactures of England should alone be resplendent at your Court. I have imagined you turning with eagerness from the brilliant festivities at

St. James's, and the ceremonies attendant on your exalted station, to fulfil the tender home-duties of relation, nurse, friend, and physician; anxiously flying with all the speed of maternal affection, to watch the sick couch of an amiable and interesting niece. Example in all ages has been said to be more persuasive than precept, so we may now reasonably hope, that from general State reform, we shall proceed to private and individual amendment, and looking to the "very root of all evil, quietly search into our own hearts," and earnestly pray and endeavour after that moral and spiritual perfection which must make us rise still higher in the scale of surrounding nations—which may preserve to us the especial blessing and protection of divine Providence, that we have so long, so eminently, so graciously shared and enjoyed: that we may hence, by our united efforts, be saved from all the horrors of civil commotion—all internal discord and rebellious strife—that we may feel assured that revolutions are the scourges of humanity—that they annihilate where amelioration is but wanting—that they purchase trifling, often merely contemptible privileges at the expense of the blood of

thousands, and injure on the side of perfection in strengthening some unimportant weak part—but here, perhaps, if I go on, I may be digressing into matters equally unsuited to my capacity and inclination; I will, therefore, retreat whilst it is yet time, and sincerely wishing your Majesty all peace, health, and prosperity,

I have the honor to remain,
Your Majesty's
Most devoted and obedient subject,

H. St. A. K.

May 20.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCESS VICTORIA,

THE HISTORICAL PLAY

OF

THE FATE OF IVAN,

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

THIS being the anniversary of your Royal Highness's birth-day, amongst the many

testimonies of sincere affection which your Royal Highness will receive from friends and relations, allow me to congratulate your Royal Highness on this important occasion, and to introduce to your particular notice in the Palace of Kensington, Catharine the Great, and the Princess Dashkoff; with whose history, I presume, your Royal Highness is already well acquainted; your Royal Highness will believe me when I say, I hope from my heart that they may meet with a gracious reception—but, however that may be, I shall not the less earnestly pray that your Royal Highness may see many, many happy returns of the day; that every year, as it adds to your Royal Highness's general information and amiable qualities, may add to your happiness and the happiness of every one deeply interested in your present and future destiny.

I have the honor to be,

With sincerity,

Your Royal Highness's most devoted,

H. St. A. K.

May 24th, 1832.

TO

THE MAJORS,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN,

AND TO

ALL THE MINORS,

THE MELO-DRAMA

OF

MISS BETSY BULL;

OR,

THE JOHNNIES IN SPAIN,

IS RESPECTFULLY INTRODUCED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

THE many difficulties attendant on private introductions of candidates to your notice;

the numerous applications which doubtless you receive; the general hurry of universal business, may frequently occasion different pieces to be overlooked, which, on leisure-consideration, might be deemed very appropriate for representation. I have selected this little drama from the three in this volume, as the one, in my mind, the most calculated for scenic display; and very glad I certainly should have been, to make Miss Betsy Bull profitable to myself in this way, but the chances are as a-thousand-to-one in such speculations, and I, therefore, give her to general notice, wishing that if ever she should make her appearance on the boards of any of your theatres, that she may be received with that indulgence and good humour so peculiarly characteristic of a British audience.

I have the honour to be,

H. St. A. K.

June 1st, 1832.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

To extenuate some failure in the execution of the design; to prepossess the mind of the reader in favour of the work he is about to undertake; or to lead him to search into the nature of that kind of writing, which it is possible he may not previously have considered, (thereby the better to enable him to form a precise judgment of the matter in question) we all know to be the general business of an introductory discourse, a ceremony, with regard to the latter, not perhaps wholly unnecessary; but with respect to the former, a useless preliminary, since there are few persons who have read a little generally, who are not capable of forming an opinion, independent of any prelusive argument, and who moreover, have not the inclination to judge for themselves—withal, it is a something expected—an established custom —a sort of frame to a picture—a binding to a work.

Voltaire observes that, "in a certain branch of literature, we cannot constantly have new works,

that nature herself does not afford more than a dozen different characters:" but is it not rather true that there is as great a variety in the character of the human species, as in their very countenances, and as in the common productions of nature? Again, to form a good drama, it is not absolutely necessary that we should find beings of an extraordinary and novel cast. Let us place the twelve different characters which he admits, in situations contrary to those which have been their previous routine of action; and we shall find that casualties, localities, varying circumstances, will call forth in those minds powers, talents, traits, qualities, and proceedings, which otherwise would not have displayed themselves, been remarked, or even excited; and may it not be as much the peculiar circumstances in which the characters are placed, as any standard peculiarity in the characters themselves, which may give interest to the piece, and a stamp of originality and genuine merit to the production? Some of our best English comedies will, I think, abundantly prove my supposition. In these trifling productions, no attempt has been made to introduce remarkable or ridiculous personages, yet there are some which may be called original; to form variety in their company dramatic writers often find themselves obliged to have recourse to delineate peculiarities of dress, of profession, of dialect, &c.; these in some degree are subterfuges, very well admitted as subservient to principals, but sometimes

injudiciously made the first persons in the drama. To develope those gradations of character which escape common observation, were, perhaps, more worthy the attention of authors of this cast; the shades are innumerable, the variety endless, the work never-failing: we all, generally speaking, profess one system of divine law, we universally acknowledge a Supreme Power; but in the moral code almost every individual has a separate divinity, and what is precisely the god of one person's idolatry, is as frequently the object of another's indifference, contempt, or aversion;—here every man establishes a certain law of his own; here, in a very small circle, we may find a great diversity, a decided, at the same time an amiable, dissimilarity, equally consistent as circumstances influence, equally consonant with the higher principles of right and wrong. Johnson has said so much, and remarked so wisely, on the breach of the unities, that it seems little necessary to apologize for the non-observance of them; I have availed myself of the indulgence granted by so high an authority, of a few short weeks, but such is the unmerciful stretch now made on the privilege, that years and ages are galloped over from scene to scene, and from act to act; and it may very fairly be presumed, that if we go on thus encroaching, in a short time we shall not only find heroes and heroines commencing and ending their own career with the piece, but living throughout the annual revolving drama, to establish their

great-grand-children. It has become an invariable custom with those venders of medicines denominated quacks, when they have any thing new to offer to the public, to send forth with their advertisements of the article they wish to recommend some credentials of the efficacy of their potions, to give a few letters gratis, as proof of their virtue, and, what is very convincing, from living and renovated subjects. In the introduction of the following letter, it may very well be said, that I consider the precedent in question a most judicious one, by following it so closely; or being a novice in the business of publication, I foresee there is much to contend with, and, like a poor man drowning, am glad to catch at every straw, to save myself from sinking into the abyss of a long bill from the printer, to which otherwise the sale of the work might not be commensurate. To return—the comedy in question having been sent some few years ago, to one of the managers of Drury Lane, when only sketched out, as it were, he returned for answer:—

"Mr. ***** presents his respectful compliments to the author of "Keep your Temper, &c.," has read with much pleasure the sketch, as she calls it, of her comedy. Mr. ***** particularly recommends the author to finish it according to her own suggestions; the character of Rolland is original, and an excellent comic character. There is something very happily turned in Mrs. Woodly's excuse to

Lady Aubrette of Sir John's conduct—the subordinate persons are faithfully drawn. Mr. ***** advises the author to continue writing, as he feels persuaded that," &c. &c.

This complimentary manager being dead, I have not the same advantage as the doctors, to whom I have just alluded, of referring to such a number, such a street, in support of the truth: the piece, however, was finished according to the advice given, and some time afterwards was sent to the Inspector of all Plays, in the presumption that he might have it in his power to promote its interests with some of the managers in the way of representation, if, on reading it, he should approve the comedy; having examined it, he procured the licence of the Lord Chamberlain, for its being performed at any theatre; but as managers are not obliged to have the same taste as those who look into the merits of such productions, *ex officio*, and as they are some seasons so completely stocked, that they cannot give promises as to any time of bringing out plays offered to them, I presume the routine of the business should have been for the comedy to have been accepted by some of the theatres in the first instance, and the licence to have been solicited in the second.

And now having said all that I can through the medium of others in favour of this trifling perform-

* See page 3.

ance, I think it advisable to reserve as concluding matter, any thing that I may have to say against it, for to give an unfavourable impression in the first instance is in all concerns an injudicious proceeding, it is what no one is expected to do expressly of himself, and true policy in such a case prompts the candidate either for fame or for profit, cautiously to avoid the path of singularity.

16 (-17)

KEEP

KEEP YOUR TEMPER!

OR,

KNOW WHOM YOU MARRY.

A Comedy, in Five Acts.

(18-20) 21

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir RUPERT GAINSFORD.
GILBERT, *his son.*
Sir JOHN AUBRETTE.
ROLLAND.
ARTHUR.
Dr. LINTON.
FIELDING.
Tom, *Servant to* Fielding.
Richard, *Servant to* Sir John Aubrette.
Patrick, *Servant to* Mrs. Woodly.
Doctor's boy, other Servants, &c.

Lady AUBRETTE, *wife to* Sir John.
LUCY, *daughter to* Sir Rupert Gainsford.
Mrs. WOODLY, *sister to* Sir Rupert Gainsford.
GERTRUDE, *her Protegée.*
Mrs. Roper, *Housekeeper to* Mrs. Woodly.

Scene lies at Richmond, at London, and at a village distant from town.

IT having been represented to me, by the Examiner of all Theatrical Entertainments, that a Manuscript entitled "Keep your Temper, or Know whom you Marry," being a Comedy, in Five Acts, does not contain in it anything immoral, or otherwise improper for the Stage, I, the Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household, do, by virtue of my Office, and in pursuance of the Act of Parliament in that case provided, allow the said Manuscript to be performed at your Theatre, without any variation whatsoever, unless such variation be likewise approved of by me in due form.

MONTROSE.

KEEP YOUR TEMPER!

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Sir* RUPERT GAINSFORD'S *house.*

Enter Sir RUPERT, GILBERT *following.*

Sir Rupert. PSHAW, pshaw! I tell thee, Gilbert, every thing there displeased me—I never met with any thing worthy of notice, nothing to attract the attention of a rational and well-informed mind.

Gil. Pardon me, Sir, if I presume to think that is utterly impossible; grant, indeed, that you had frequently visited these scenes, and that mere familiarity might have rendered uninteresting to you, all those exhibitions, which must have a thousand charms for a young, and ardent mind.

Sir Rupert. Ardent! aye, aye, there's the danger; now come my punishments. [*Apart*] I tell you, it is a filthy place, this same London that you are so mad after, why, there is no seeing through their dirty windows.

Gil. I shall be always outside.

Sir Rupert. There thou wilt find tubs of rose-trees, pots of myrtle, boxes of mignionette, plates of daisies, dishes of marygolds, oh! mockery of the beauties of nature, besmeared with the dust which the wind hourly and liberally pours upon them; this constitutes the flower-garden, and then, if there fortunately be a yard of ground at the back part of the dwelling, it is as regularly set with cabbage plants and potatoes, mint, parsley, sage, and thyme! and this forms the kitchen-garden.

Gil. But I am not in the search of gardens of any description. It is the advancement of the arts, the progress of science, the perfection of Genius, the——

Sir Rupert. Perversion of man's taste, that leads him to prefer the pollution of cities, to the unsophisticated charms of rural life.

Gil. But by practically proving the vanity and insufficiency of the one, are we not more likely to become immutably enamoured of the other?

Sir Rupert. Aye, Gilbert, I see thou canst be eloquent enough in a bad cause, but, in forcing upon ourselves experimental conviction, how often do we plant in the bosom a thorn, which we cannot afterwards eradicate?

Gil. Tell me, Sir, frankly, are not the public buildings worthy my attention?

Sir Rupert. Fudge! fudge! there's scarcely a mansion in the whole metropolis, to be compared with this; why my very pigs are better lodged than many fine people in that great city. And as for that huge pile called St. Paul's, can any body say

for what purpose it was made so big; why, it is a fact, Sir, that the part in this immense Church allotted for the service is not much larger than the vestry room of this parish.

Gil. The religious part of the community was not so numerous, probably, in former days, as it now is; it appears we improve.

Sir Rupert. In short, this same London is a rigmarole overgrown place, without either form or fashion; I doubt if any one can tell on what plan it was originally built, or if it was built on any plan at all.

Gil. But what is that to the purpose? Why give me books, pictures of mankind, and not allow me to see the real representation?

Sir Rupert. Books, son, have not given thee this taste, it is the idle conversation of the wandering multitude that has seduced thee; fools, and worse than fools, who, on returning from the great city, puff every block which they have met, to escape the censure of having travelled far and seen nothing; thus, are the minds of youth inflamed with a passion for novelty which, in the end, fails not to disgust them with home scenes, and domestic enjoyment.

Gil. Would you have me then, Sir, stuck up in this corner of the world all my life, like one of your cabbage plants? are not my principles fixed, Sir?

Sir Rupert. I hope so, Gilbert, I hope so.

Gil. Could any thing on earth induce me even to enter a gaming-house?

Sir Rupert. I believe not, Gilbert, I believe not.

Gil. I have made a solemn promise to myself, that no mortal ever shall persuade me to approach such a door—I will make you the same promise.

Sir Rupert. Well, well.

Gil. You know my opinion of duelling.

Sir Rupert. True, true, but the wisest will sometimes err; happy is he who is not exposed to temptation.

Gil. I do not say so, Sir! radicate principle, expose it to trial, and you then perfect the man.

Sir Rupert. Or ruin him, perhaps beyond redemption! prevention is my maxim.

Gil. Perseverance my motto.

Sir Rupert. Alas, alas!

Gil. I know that I am sanguine, perhaps what some persons may call hot-headed, but, have I ever once in my life, given you any serious cause of uneasiness?

Sir Rupert. Not as yet—not as yet.

Gil. Of what, then, are you afraid?

Sir Rupert. Ah! my son, there are so many evil accidents befalling us, on the high road of life, that no mortal wisdom can foresee, no human prudence avert, that with the best dispositions we may be overthrown; let us not, therefore, court danger, let us not presume too much on our own strength.

Gil. Oh! all this is making of a simple journey, a matter of too serious import.

Sir Rupert. [*apart.*] Ah! I must be punished.

Enter LUCY, *a basket of fruit in her hand.*

Lucy. Oh papa! see what the last night's

storm has done for us, all these, and they are but half ripe.

Sir Rupert. Take 'em away! take 'em away!

[*Sir* RUPERT *walks about in evident emotion.*

Gil. This is unfortunate.

[GILBERT *signs to* LUCY—*she retreats hiding the basket as she moves, and puts it into a closet.*

Enter ROLLAND, *a whip in his hand.*

Roll. Tantivy! tantivy! [*perceiving* LUCY, *then turning to Sir* RUPERT—] Ha, my Gracia, Fallacia! is it you? What is your daughter's name, Sir Rupert?—so much enamoured of her various perfections, I always forget the little nominative indicative of the charming superlative!

Sir Rupert. Fudge!

Lucy. Some call me Rose, the poets Delia fair;
Some swains less courteous, boldly oft declare,
Nor wit nor grace doth simple Lucy boast,
And wonder how she grew the village toast.

Roll. Well, then, my Delia bright, my Rose, I say;
Does my friend Gilbert dine at home to-day?
[*turning to* GILBERT.
Your rhyme is quite infectious, Miss Gainsford.
[LUCY *and* GILBERT *converse.*

Sir Rupert. Pray, Sir, is your father at home?

Roll. Certainly, Sir, I believe I can answer for that; he is at home at all times, frequently before he puts his stockings on in a morning, he is very glad

of the assistance of any of his neighbours in cutting his corns; so that if you are at all accomplished in the art——

Sir Rupert. Tell him, I shall dine with him to-day. [*impatiently.*

Roll. Most obliging! by all means! tantivy, tantivy; a fine stag is to be turned out to-day; you'll go, won't you, Gilbert?

Gil. No, it is quite impossible; in three minutes I shall be on the high road to London.

Roll. [*to Sir* RUPERT.] Is it possible, Father Cautious, you can have been persuaded to give consent to that?

Sir Rupert. To what, pray Sir?

[LUCY *signs to* ROLLAND *to be silent.*

Roll. Why, Sir, to pay the powder-tax these hard times.

[ROLLAND *lightly touches Sir* RUPERT'S *wig, from which the powder abundantly flies.*

Sir Rupert. Pray, Sir, tell your father I wish to investigate with him the title-deeds to the estate of Beekelfield, and that I shall come early.

[*Exit* GILBERT.

Roll. Most obliging! the sooner the more agreeable, doubt not. [*apart.*] The old rogue wants me gone already—this estate of Beekelfield, I presume, may be thought of as a marriage settlement; you contemplate the purchase in case I should determine, you understand? I say, Lucy, my love——

Sir Rupert. How, Sir?

Roll. You will dine with us also?

Sir Rupert. No, Sir, she will not.

Lucy. No; certainly not; I have not studied at the feet of Gamaliel, I have no acquaintance with Blackstone; I have no opinion on the dull subject of title-deeds.

Roll. But we can parley apart, my beloved.

[*Sir* RUPERT *walks impatiently about.*

Lucy. What of hunting the stag; I have no taste that way either.

Roll. Can one talk of the stag or the law when you are present?

Sir Rupert. If you cannot immediately take my message, pray say so, and I will send a servant.

Roll. Very proper, indeed! but, however, I am going home—with a heigh—[*going, returns.*] ho! chevy! hark forward! hark forward tantivy! Shall I tell dad you'll come at four?

Sir Rupert. No, in an hour I shall be with him.

Roll. Very good! [*going, returns.*] What shall we have for dinner?

Sir Rupert. Fudge!

Roll. Adieu, my Arethusa bright,

Your bloom, without your wealth, a weaker wight
Than Hercules, might tempt to knock the dragon down,
A better prize than his, the toil would crown!
[*to* LUCY.

See how you have inspired me.

Lucy. Go, Sir! get you gone,
Or you will find more dragons here than one.

Roll. True love is all obedience. [*going.*

Sir Rupert. Pri'thee dream no more of that.

Roll. I lov'd a maid, she me betray'd,
Good care I'll take so don't another.
The chace shall be my mistress, she
Will prove more kind than any other!
With a heigh ho! chevy, hark forward! hark forward, tantivy! [*Exit* ROLLAND.

[*Sir* RUPERT *holds up his cane in a menacing manner after* ROLLAND *as he is going out.*

Sir Rupert. Come, Rose, we will take a turn round the shrubbery, and see what the last night's storm has done there.

Lucy. Lean on my arm, papa, you are still a little lame from your last attack of the gout.

[*As they are going out on one side,* ROLLAND *enters at the other.*

Roll. I say Lucy, my love, shall I call upon you this evening?

[*Sir* RUPERT *hurries away;* ROLLAND *affects to pursue them.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Mrs.* WOODLY'S *House.*

Mrs. WOODLY *reading a Letter.*

[*Mrs. Woodly reads*]—"In short, I can no longer resist his pressing importunities, ardent, and half-ignorant of the world as he is, I tremble for the event; I must, therefore, entreat you to watch over him with parental anxiety, for were I to accompany

him, I should only be considered as a spy upon his actions, and that might, eventually, lessen the confidence which has hitherto subsisted between us. I depend, however, much on your care and affection. Be not surprised if he should arrive a few minutes after the receipt of this letter.

I remain, in the utmost affliction,

GAINSFORD."

Oh! what an unexpected stroke is this! which way shall I turn? what is to be done? what plan shall I adopt? shall I declare to him the whole truth? the painful truth! No! I cannot—yet, when I consider the power of virtue, intelligence, and beauty, on an unsophisticated mind, I feel it would be best——alas! alas! could I dream that this anxiety was to be the fruit of my cares?

Enter Patrick.

Pat. Lady Aubrette, your honor. [*Exit* Patrick.

Mrs. Wood. It is well, a thought, a happy thought occurs.

Enter Lady AUBRETTE.

Lady Aub. Ah, my dear Mrs. Woodly, how d'ye do? I am come to claim your promise——

Mrs. Woodly. And I must again have recourse to your indulgence to plead my excuse, I am not sufficiently recovered to leave home at present.

Lady Aub. Is this really the case?—and Gertrude?

Mrs. Woodly. She is quite at your service for the whole of the summer.

Lady Aub. I am delighted with that arrangement, for securing the one is half gaining possession of the other.

Mrs. Wood. And where is Sir John?

Lady Aub. He stopt at the door to speak to young Melville, but already I hear him.

Enter Sir JOHN, *bowing.*

Sir John. I have the pleasure to see Mrs. Woodly better?

Mrs. Wood. Though by no means recovered—I thank you, Sir John.

Lady Aub. [*Throws herself into a chair.*] Ah! misericorde! how fatigued I am! that rugged ride you made me take yesterday, Sir John.

Sir John. I thought t'would have prevented your having the vapours to-day, my Lady.

Mrs. Wood. Allow me to offer you some refreshment.

Lady Aub. Excuse me, madam, I cannot take any thing. I see, Sir John, one may die very quietly in your presence.

Sir John. Surely I could not think of disturbing the last moments of one so dear to me.

Lady Aub. Oh, Sir John, you are the most provoking of men.

Sir John. I think we might both improve ourselves. Excuse the liberty we take in your presence, madam.

Mrs. Wood. No ceremony, I entreat.

Lady Aub. I shall return home immediately.

[*Lady* AUBRETTE *rings.*

Sir John. But compose your spirits, my love—be a little calm.

Lady Aub. I hate calmness, and all calm people.

Enter Patrick.

Call my carriage immediately. [Patrick *going.*

Sir John. Order mine to wait till I come.

[Patrick *going, returns.*

Lady Aub. Obey my orders!

Sir John. You have heard me?

Pat. Sure, your honor, I can obey both, first I will call the coach for my lady, and then tell him to wait for his lordship. [*Exit* Patrick.

Lady Aub. [*to Mrs.* WOODLY.] Is this to be endured?

Mrs. Wood. My dear Lady Aubrette, let me entreat you——

Lady Aub. No, no! we shall see who will be obeyed. [*Exit hastily Lady* AUBRETTE.

Mrs. Wood. Lady Aubrette is very young.

Sir John. True, true, I have not to complain exactly of her being a termagant, but she is a composition of extravagancies infinitely more difficult of cure, and if the evil be not rooted out in the beginning, it is evident no social happiness can be expected in the end.

Mrs. Wood. I hope much from time and your good management; and then Lady Aubrette possesses a superior understanding.

Sir John. I am satisfied as to that, and am,

therefore, encouraged to proceed—but I hear her returning—I will, if you please, retire by this door, and in the moment take possession of the disputed vehicle.

Mrs. Wood. By all means, Sir John, and my carriage is at her ladyship's service.

Sir John. In the interim, I leave her to your very good counsel. [*Exit Sir* JOHN.

Mrs. Wood. Depend upon me. I hope this delay may not prove unfortunate to my plans.

Re-enter hastily Lady AUBRETTE *looking about.*

Lady Aub. Where is the monster, madam?

Mrs. Wood. Oh, he very calmly left me by that door.

Lady Aub. Tell me, madam, is this treatment to be endured?

Mrs. Wood. Certainly, it ought not to be continued.

Lady Aub. There have I been sitting all this time in the carriage, and the creature would not move a jot; in vain I threatened and abused him, he remained like a cucumber in its bed; obeyed implicitly the orders of his tyrannical master, and fearful of a mob gathering round me, I was at last obliged to return—tell me, madam, was this right?

Mrs. Wood. Very far from it, indeed! and, tho' we do promise a sort of obedience at the altar——

Lady Aub. We do not vow to obey, if the men should be unreasonable in commanding us.

Mrs. Wood. Good! yet we cannot marry on conditional terms, and——

Lady Aub. Truly, the marriage act has great need of amendment!

Mrs. Wood. Let us sit—you are fatigued [*Mrs.* WOODLY *draws chairs and they sit.*] Sir John appears to be incessantly reproving you.

Lady Aub. Continually, my dear Mrs. Woodly, everlastingly!

Mrs. Wood. And, perhaps, frequently condemns you without any just reason.

Lady Aub. Every hour of his life, madam!

Mrs. Wood. To what may we attribute all this?

Lady Aub. Oh! to the caprice, the madness, the overbearing spirit of the sex.

Mrs. Wood. I think not, exactly: it arises partly, I believe, from his excessive vanity.

Lady Aub. My dear Mrs. Woodly, I am charmed with your penetration—excessive vanity, indeed.

Mrs. Wood. And still more from his extreme love for——

Lady Aub. For whom, in the name of pity?

Mrs. Wood. His very great love for you.

Lady Aub. How can that be? explain.

Mrs. Wood. Such is his extraordinary attachment, that he never appears to abstract his mind a moment from you—not a syllable you utter escapes him—and of the most trifling inadvertencies, that a being to whom you were perfectly indifferent would scarcely discover if pointed out, Sir John seizes the moment, and investigates each error with all the scrutiny of an alchymist; this certainly proves the

strength of his attachment, and the height of his vanity is equally manifested, or he would not be so very anxious to render superior to the slightest mortal imperfection the person thus nearly related to himself, and thus tenderly beloved.

Lady Aub. Ah, could I think so—but yet what a strange method he takes to make me superior: but—

Mrs. Wood. The best artists often err in the execution, when they have not been faulty in the design.

Lady Aub. But seriously now, Mrs. Woodly, what do you consider my most remarkable failings?

Mrs. Wood. Oh, excuse me, I must leave them for Sir John to discover.

Lady Aub. With a microscopic eye!

Mrs. Wood. True! but if one could prevent him discovering any——

Lady Aub. Ah, that, indeed, were an utter impossibility, and certainly the gross exists in the man's imagination.

Mrs. Wood. He determines, however, to root out the evil which he fancies he sees, and how calmly persevering he is.

Lady Aub. A perfect mule!

Mrs. Wood. Whom it is in vain to attempt to lead or drive; nothing moves him.

Lady Aub. It is precisely that which provokes me! if I could but once put him out of humour——

Mrs. Wood. I think it is hardly possible.

Lady Aub. Well, if ever it should be my fate to

be left a widow, never, no, never will I marry again!

Mrs. Wood. But, when once one has entered the state, it is as well to seek contentment in it, and——

Lady Aub. How, in the name of reason?

Mrs. Wood. By mutual endeavours to oblige; one must be——

Lady Aub. So ridiculously obedient!

Mrs. Wood. No, no! only amiably attentive; patient, when reproved; not bearing in mind little trifling offences, and, by way of prefatory practice, promise to say nothing of this affair of the coach on your return home; endeavour——

Lady Aub. I will; but, upon my honor, it is so very impudent an affair! [*looking at her watch.*] It is late; I will just leave an order at the mercer's, and return for Gertrude.

Mrs. Wood. Do, my dear friend; you shall not have to wait one moment for her; pray use all dispatch to precede Sir John.

Lady Aub. I saw your carriage at the door.

Mrs. Wood. It is quite at your service; I rely on your promptitude, and will instantly hasten Gertrude.

Lady Aub. In the mean time, should Sir John return hither, do not fail to lecture him on his vanity.

Mrs. Wood. I will not forget.

[*Exeunt together.*

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SCENE III.—*A Library.*

Enter Mrs. WOODLY.

Mrs. Wood. How thankful I am that Lady Aubrette is gone, and that Gertrude will soon be out of this house! Yet how oppressed I feel—what a prophetic sadness sits at my heart!—alas, if this simple concealment, originating from the best motives, can thus affect me, what must be their feelings who are burdened with the consciousness of guilt? [*Rings.*

Enter Patrick.

Pray where is Mrs. Roper?

Pat. Your pardon, madam, but that is quite impossible to tell; gossiping, I dare say, in some corner of the town, talking scandal of every body in the house, not accepting even your honor.

Mrs. Wood. Desire her to come to me as soon as she returns. [*Sits to a table and begins to write.*

Pat. I will, your honor—but there never was such a wasp as Madam Roper.

[*Exit* Patrick; *as he is going out, Mrs.* Roper *enters from the opposite side, and overhears the last words.*

Mrs. Roper. Now to think of the impudence of that plebeian, he has been abusing me slily.

Mrs. Wood. [*looking up.*] Oh! you are here, then, Roper?

Mrs. Roper. Your pardon, madam; I have not

been out ten minutes, but there is such a set of mischievous people in this place.

Mrs. Wood. Roper, I do not complain, it is of no consequence so I am satisfied.

Mrs. Roper. It is impossible for a gentlewoman to brook it, and——

Mrs. Wood. Hear me now, Roper, I wish to have the two spare rooms in the left wing immediately prepared, they will, probably, be wanted this very evening.

Mrs. Roper. Very well, madam, it shall be done immediately; only I was going to observe, that I could not live with that piece of vulgarity.

Mrs. Wood. Another time I will attend to your grievances—but now there must not be any delay—order dinner an hour earlier than usual—and, if any stranger should arrive before I return, shew him into this room, and say I shall be at home very soon. [*Apart.*] I pray that he may not arrive this day. [*Exit Mrs.* WOODLY.

Mrs. Roper. Very well, madam. [*looking out after her.*] Let herself out! What can be in the wind? Humph! humph! humph! really my lady begins to command me like a common servant in the house—but I see how it is, that low-bred creature has been forging a packet of lies of me to my mistress, and she, poor easy woman, believes all she hears—well, ladies are strange sort of ladies now-a-days, to be listening to the tales of such varlets—but I wonder what can be in the wind, now? both bedrooms to be got ready!—first, however, let me be

even with my gentleman, I'll give him a drubbing, or my name's not Roper. [*She rings very loudly.*

Enter Patrick.

So, Sir, for once you have condescended to answer my bell? [Patrick *looking about him with surprise.*

Pat. What, then, is not her honor here?

Mrs. Roper. Yes, Sir, her honor is here! [*drawing herself up.*] And so, Mr. Impudence, you call me a wasp, do you?

Pat. And did her honor really tell you that?

Mrs. Roper. And so you thought I was not in the confidence of my Mistress, eh? but I'll teach you to tell lies of me, you ungrateful—have I not, time after time, given you of the sweets of the store-room?

Pat. Ah, yes, indeed, Madam Roper, but that was to qualify the pickles you obliged me to swallow.

Mrs. Roper. How many a cordial glass have you had from me?

Pat. Whenever I caught you taking a sly drop, as your ill luck would have it.

Mrs. Roper. Will you promise never to talk scandal of me again? Will you, I say?

[*Shaking his shoulders.*

Pat. Ods my life, without—[*a loud knocking and ringing.*] all this ceremony.

Mrs. Roper. Alack a day! I shall be caught.

[*Running about*

Pat. And that in a vile bad action, Madam Roper— [*Knocking and ringing again.*

Mrs. Roper. Where are my keys? Where are my keys? [*running about.*] Is the porter at the door? Blockhead, what are you doing here?

Pat. Your honor forgets that she rang for me. Sure your honor sometimes forgets herself like many other great folks. [*Exit* Patrick.

Mrs. Roper. Stupid fool!—this comes of stopping here to take revenge! My keys, my keys, what shall I do? Suppose the strangers should be come. [*Exit hastily, Mrs.* Roper.

Pat. [*speaking without.*] This way, your honor, this way!

Enter Patrick, GILBERT *following.*

Gil. Be so good as to tell my servant to give you the paper-case at the back of the carriage. [*Exit* Patrick.] So far, friend Rolland, I am safe, in spite of your prophecies, and my father's forebodings.

Re-enter Patrick *with a small Portfolio, which he places on a Table.*

Gil. At what time do you expect Mrs. Woodly home?

Pat. Every moment, sure, your honor, for dinner is ordered an hour sooner than usual, only Madam Roper has lost her keys, and that may put us all back, perhaps, and——

Gil. Who is Madam Roper?

Pat. The housekeeper here, Sir, who will soon scrape acquaintance with you—but I would have you beware of her, she is deep.

Gil. Thank you, friend! thank you! [*apart.*] From the Green Isle, I presume.

Pat. Ah, believe me, she's a wasp, that has not a civil word for any one, except my lady's Prodijay.

Gil. Now what can that be? some parrot, or monkey, I suppose.

Pat. Then, if it is not the prettiest and quietest of the kind, Patrick O'Laughligan never saw the land of Saints.

Gil. He seems inclined to communicate, if he did but know how. [*apart.*] In plain English, who, or what is it?

Pat. To be sure, your honor, it is a young lady.

Gil. But what is her name? [*impatiently.*] Has she no name?

Pat. No! never a one, your honor.

Gil. A very extraordinary lady indeed! no name! [*apart.*] This fellow's intelligence only serves to put one more in the dark. You mistake, friend! she must have a name!

Pat. Oh, yes, yes! Have a little patience; I do recollect more about it, she has a name; but nobody believes it to be her true name, they say it is a sham—they call her Stanley, sometimes.

Gil. Stanley, Stanley! I do not recollect such a name in any of Mrs. Woodly's letters, but has she no relations, no friends—no father—no mother?

Pat. [*earnestly.*] No, your honor, I don't hear that ever she had.

Gil. Good!—what can I make of all this? It appears, then, that there is some mystery about this young lady?

Pat. Oh! a very great deal? for I don't find that Mrs. Roper with all her learning has been able to find it out, and every body seems mighty curious about her, and I think, Sir, as how you are pretty much infected in the same way.

Gil. Be that as it may, I shall hear the whole story from Mrs. Woodly.

Pat. No you wont, sure, your honor, and, as I see you are a stranger here, let me give you a bit of advice.

Gil. Thank you, friend! thank you! proceed.

Pat. Take care, then, what questions you ask about young Miss, if you would keep in with the old lady, my very good mistress, whom I love with all my shoul.

Gil. Proceed with——

Pat. Her honor has offended many of her quality friends, because they asked questions that were not quite agreeble, you understand?

Gil. Perfectly! perfectly! and thank you for the hint. [*A knock at the door.*

Pat. Your lordship will excuse me for a minute, you see the porter is out. [*Exit* Patrick.

Gil. This man is, certainly, one of his own country, and a very agreeable natural, in truth—but who comes this way? [*looking out.*] I will retreat a little, for this, if I mistake not, must be the prodigy or protegée.

[GILBERT *retires to the further part of the Stage.*

Enter GERTRUDE, *who, not perceiving* GILBERT, *throws herself into a Chair.*

Gert. Well, well, I am prepared according to order, but oh, my heart, I feel as if I were never to return here! I feel as if I could not survive the grief that oppresses me—when I entreated to stay, Mrs. Woodly insisted in the most peremptory manner—I never knew her insist before—forbid to wait her return! What can all this mean?

Gil. [*advances and bows.*] Pardon me, madam, I ought sooner to have apologized for this intrusion, but the surprise of the moment——

Gert. [*looking astonished.*] I, I do not recollect——I mean——

Gil. If you are an inmate of this house, madam, I presume you will readily guess who I am?

Gert. I am, indeed, Sir, an inmate here, yet I am totally ignorant who it is I have the honor to address.

Gil. Then it is evident Mrs. Woodly did not expect her nephew in town so soon?

Gert. Mrs. Woodly's nephew! you, Sir! pardon me, I did not know that you were expected at all.

Gil. Ah! I see how it is, my father's letter apprising my aunt of my intention, has not reached. In fact, I set off almost at an hour's notice.

Gert. Certainly, certainly, she cannot know of your coming, or, perhaps, she might not have insisted on my leaving at this precise time.

Gil. [*apart.*] Excellent! You have, then, been some time resident with Mrs. Woodly, madam?

Gert. Oh yes! many, many happy years; I have read to her, have written for her, have visited with her the sick and the needy—and now, for the first time, I am to leave her—perhaps for ever!

Gil. But I will plead with Mrs. Woodly for your remaining, she cannot refuse a nephew whom she has not seen these fourteen years.

Gert. Oh! no, no, no! I believe it will be best to be silent—a second thought convinces me it will be in vain—she has insisted so peremptorily, I must not urge!

Gil. Would she would return! But is it a great distance, is it a long journey you are about to take? [*Earnestly.*

Gert. Ten miles!

Gil. Ho, ho, ten miles, only ten miles! why that is nothing. Oh compose your spirits.

Enter Mrs. Roper, *hastily crossing the Stage.*

Gert. Stay, Roper, only one moment, I entreat you.

Mrs. Roper. My dear Miss, I am in so much haste.

Gert. Tell me, then, in one word, did you know that this gentleman was to be here to-day?

Mrs. Roper. Yes, to be sure, dear Miss Gertrude, it is that which makes me run so fast.

[*Exit hastily, Mrs.* Roper.

Gert. I am lost in astonishment!

Gil. Upon my honor, I begin to consider myself of less importance amongst my relations than I had presumed. So my aunt has received the news, and did not think it worth communicating to her most particular friend.

Gert. The more I think, the more I am perplexed.

Enter Patrick.

Pat. Lady Aubrette, your honor. [*Exit* Patrick.

Enter hastily Lady AUBRETTE.

Lady Aub. My dear Gertrude, I have been detained rather longer——

[*Perceiving* GILBERT, *she stops.*

Gert. Mr. Gainsford, Mrs. Woodly's nephew, Lady Aubrette. [*Introducing them.*

Lady Aub. Mrs. Woodly's nephew! how's this? I did not know Mrs. Woodly expected her nephew in town? Only think, my dear, how we married women are kept in the dark.

Gert. And I can prove to you, my dear Lady Aubrette, that the single ones are not better treated, for I knew not a syllable that this gentleman was expected, and yet it appears that Mrs. Roper was fully informed.

Lady Aub. How incomprehensible! there must be some mystery in all this; some plot——

Gert. But I cannot imagine what.

Lady Aub. Ah, that will come out presently; now I am determined to be even with them—a

thought strikes me! a good idea—Mr. Gainsford, I trust you will frequently honor us with your visits at Richmond—I will introduce you to the ty, ty, to Sir John Aubrette; [*apart*] (tho', by the bye, not immediately.) It is a charming ride from town.

Gil. Your ladyship does me infinite honour, and I know not how better to express my gratitude than by accepting your invitation the very first opportunity; I hear we have an early dinner; this very evening, then, perhaps——

Lady Aub. Do, pray, my dear Sir, I am certain you will be enchanted with the neighbourhood.

Gil. I feel assured I should, were it even like the vale of Cimmeria.

Lady Aub. He is really quite charming. [*Apart.*] On second thoughts, Mr. Gainsford, not a word of this intended visit to Mrs. Woodly; enjoin all the servants to secresy; and, for the present, I shall not notice it to Sir John. I intend to surprise them all as much by our acquaintance, as they have thought proper to astonish us, by bringing you here.

Gil. Oh, I am dumb, I am dumb.

Gert. But, my dear Lady Aubrette, this is a plan which, in the end, I fear will be disagreeable to Mrs. Woodly.

Lady Aub. Pshaw, child! now do not unsettle my charming speculations. I really do not wish to consult anybody's fancy but my own. Pray, my dear, of whom did you buy that witch of a hat?

Gert. I forget, but I think it was Mrs. Woodly's taste.

Lady Aub. Exactly what the dear creature herself wears.

Gert. Excuse me, but your own——

Lady Aub. True, I had forgotten, but I recollect now, that I put on this ridiculous-looking thing to put my spouse out of countenance.

Gert. Indeed! I do not think that quite right.

Lady Aub. But I'm sure you'll think so before you've been a year married.

Gert. Then truly it were better to remain single.

Lady Aub. Positively, now, we must go. [*looking at her watch.*] Mr. Gainsford, one word—whenever you come to see us, send in your card, no name upon it, your initials only—when I shall return for answer, admit the stranger.

Gil. Mighty good! I am all obedience, madam. [*Lady* AUBRETTE *going.*] Allow me the honor to attend you to your carriage. [*Exeunt together.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A rural Scene.* LUCY *and* ARTHUR *seated.*

Lucy. I say, my dear Arthur, that Gilbert is mad; that Rolland is mad; in short, that there is scarcely a reasonable person in the village, except Sir Rupert, and Charles, the vicar's son.

Arthur. [*starting from his seat.*] And Charles! confusion——

Lucy. Aye, there it is, let me but say Charter, Charlemagne, or anything like Charles, your eyes start, you look so wild, I am sure you would terrify a stranger; then there is Gilbert, talk to him of the metropolis, he is on fire! talk to Rolland of the chace, and he flies over chairs and tables, with a heigh, ho! chevy! and all this in a room where one is reading or working.

Arthur. And Simon?

Lucy. Mixes food for the body, with physic for the soul, and tells Jenny Spruce, if she puts two eggs into a pudding, she will never go to heaven.

Arthur. Ha, ha! poor Simon.

Lucy. Which makes me seriously think that there is scarcely a reasonable person in the place, except Charles.

Arthur. Oh, Lucy! you play with me.

Lucy. And have we not played together all our lives, Arthur? why, then, should the game be now so serious?

Arthur. Have I not cause to be serious, when the very echoes are mocking me with the name of Charles?

Lucy. Why, truly, you don't pay attention to what you read, or disregard the opinion of the wise and the experienced.

Arthur. Explain——

Lucy. Did not that author you were reading to me last night declare, that it was very difficult for any one to pronounce the name of the person that most interested him or her?

Arthur. Then my Lucy does not seriously think Charles superior to every other?

Lucy. Pshaw! how could you suppose so, or even think that I had any preference for any one?

Arthur. Would you lead a single, dreary, and unsocial life?

Lucy. Oh, no! I will not be dreary or unsocial, you shall come and see me very often, and Gilbert, and Rolland, and Cha— Cha—

[*Stopping, as she pronounces Charles.*

ARTHUR *sings.*

When the chill blasts of winter prevail,
  When the dark night of age shall appear,
Think, Lucy, how soothing the tale
  Of affection—of friendship sincere!

If sickness your form should assail,
With your grief should my sympathy be,
When your roses, my Lucy, turn pale,
The lily shall charms have for me!

Ah, then! how sincerely I'd prove
My esteem cannot change, cannot die;
Independent of seasons, my love
Lives on worth still more bright than your eye.

LUCY *sings.*

So all lovers say, my dear Arthur,
But papa tells me none to believe,
So I turn a deaf ear to their stories,
And then they can never deceive.

I ne'er was in love yet—however
I won't say I never will be,
For the god that has wounded young Colin,
May, perchance, throw an arrow at me.

[*Exit* LUCY.

ARTHUR *sings.*

Sweet hope! I will cherish thee, then;
Yes, time on my cares may improve,
Away from me, fears of hard fate,
I shall win the bright smile of my love.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A rural Scene.*

Enter ROLLAND *singing.*

Roll. I lov'd a maid, she me betray'd,
Good lack, I ne'er shall love another,

The chace shall be my mistress, she
Will prove more kind than any other;

Oh ne'er shall I coquet again,
For t'would remind me of the pain
That Dolly gave her luckless swain;
So, though by Dolly I was crost,
Community has nothing lost.

With a heigh ho chevy! [*Looking out, he perceives Sir* RUPERT.] Ah, here comes a suspicious old soul, who, by the distrust he entertains of every one that addresses his daughter, has certainly acted, at some time of his life, a very busy part in the gay world; and then he is so very avaricious that he cannot resolve to secure her in wedlock, and, though he approves of the suit of young Arthur, and though the attachment is mutual, I perceive they may grow grey in waiting his consent, if I do not help them by frightening him into compliance, and true charity that might, perhaps, be to him, for the old soul would then sleep in peace —with a heigh ho chevy!

Enter Sir RUPERT.

Roll. Ah, how do you do, father?

Sir Rupert. You vainly flatter yourself, Sir.

Roll. No, I don't though; but setting aside a certain expectation, you are, positively, so like my old dad, that it is with difficulty I can tell to which I belong.

Sir Rupert. Thank Heaven! you don't belong to me.

Roll. Most obliging; more of that hereafter—for the present I must tell you that a fine sleek stag is to be turned out to-day, which, from the strong resemblance it bears to your daughter, and the love I bear to her, I have christened Lucy.

Sir Rupert. I beg, Sir, you will not make quite so free with my daughter's name.

Roll. Excuse me, Sir, but in a free country like this, a man has certainly a right to call his dog, or his horse, his cow, or his ass, by any name he pleases; besides, if you had any taste, you would have considered it the highest compliment I could possibly pay your daughter—all the ladies of my acquaintance would like it abominably.

Sir Rupert. Your acquaintance being, I doubt not, of the abominable order.

Roll. You have hit it; abominably stupid. With a heigh ho chevy, hark forward, hark forward, tantivy—this day must Lucy fly.

Sir Rupert. [*Apart.*] I'll have a care of you, Sir.

Roll. Do you know, Sir, I was once on the eve of running off with a pretty girl, and just as I was stepping into the carriage that was to convey me on the wings of impatience to Gretna, I most unfortunately, as then it appeared to be, broke my leg, and before I could get the pieces put together again, the old father came up and arrested our course—but I'll take care my leg don't break a second time.

Sir Rupert. [*Apart.*] Thank you for the hint.

Roll. Yes, yes, this accident has made me careful, and I hope for a better bargain than the last; no more fathers shall interrupt me again.

Sir Rupert. I'll beware of you.

[*Walks about disturbedly.*

Roll. I presume, Sir, you are going to dine with my father to-day?

Sir Rupert. Pray, Sir, what reason have you to presume that?

Roll. La, Sir, I read it in your all-expressive phiz.

Sir Rupert. Give me leave to assure you, you have totally misconstrued the language of my looks, I am not going to see your father, nor is your father's son coming to see my daughter.

Enter hastily LUCY *with a letter.*

Lucy. Papa, papa, another letter from Gilbert; you may equally depend upon all his promises.

[*Giving the letter.*

Sir Rupert. Ah, Rose, that is yet to fear.

[*He begins to read.*

Lucy. All good news, papa?

Roll. I say, Lucy, my love, will you be at home this evening?

Sir Rupert. [*Turning from the letter.*] No. S'death! in my presence.

Lucy. No, no, no; to be sure not.

Roll. What not for a single hour?

Lucy. No, no, no, no, not for a single moment.

[*Sir* RUPERT *holds up his cane.*

Roll. But you don't tell us what Trim, there, is about, I wager he'll come home without a sixpence in his pocket, or a shoe to his foot.

Sir Rupert. [*Groaning.*] That I dread! [*Apart.*] I dread my punishments.

Lucy. Dear papa, don't be concerned at his nonsense.

Sir Rupert. Let's see, let's see, I must answer this; this is good at least for the present; it shall be answered.

Lucy. Pray, papa, set about it immediately.

Roll. [*Going.*] Adieu, my Helen bright, remember thy adoring Paris! remember ere the officious night, and envious sleep those azure eyes shall seal, I must, I will again behold them!

Sir Rupert. But I'll take care of that.

[*Exit* LUCY *and Sir* RUPERT.

Roll. Ha ha ha! the old soul is afraid of his own shadow, and success must attend my pursuit. [*Looking out.*] Ah, à propos! here comes that love-sick dog, young Arthur, just as I was thinking of him; I do believe I can serve him in a double way, nevertheless, I abominate these languishing creatures—Oh! I must cure him—it is time he was cured;—notwithstanding the damsel never gives the slightest encouragement to any other man, he can hardly persuade himself that she prefers him—so now, to bring his disorder to a head, give him a complete fit of jealousy, and finally establish his future happiness.

[ROLLAND *retreats into the back ground.*

Enter ARTHUR, *a book in his hand.*

Arthur. She is right, it is precisely what he has said—but, alas!

"Where'er we go, whatever state we prove,—

ROLLAND *coming forward.*

Roll. "One is each season when we truly love."

But, my dear Arthur, what's the matter? how pale you look—are you ill?

Arthur. No, not exactly, yet I believe this weather does not agree with me.

Roll. It has, I know, a very unpleasant effect upon me.

Arthur. As how? you look very well.

Roll. My complexion, indeed, seldom changes, yet I cannot help recollecting that it was just at this unfortunate season that I experienced one of the greatest calamities that could possibly happen to a man of my sensibility.

Arthur. May I inquire farther?

Roll. In truth, I am loth to tell you, for, as you seem to be in a melancholy mood, you will, probably, be assimilating a sort of something in my fate with your own situation, and yet, my dear fellow, we rarely hear of the same accidents occurring to two different persons.

Arthur. Very rarely, indeed! and therefore you need not be so delicate about my feelings.

Roll. It is, indeed, a common case enough; to be brief—three years ago, just at this very season, I fell seriously in love, and I was fool enough to believe that the girl loved me equally—and yet I cannot say that she ever told me so—but this, you know, we men frequently think unnecessary, for we have an unfortunate habit of translating cant kind words and insignificant smiles, into important preference, and yet, to say truth, she did not trouble me much with these, but, on the contrary, would often call me fool, madman, and the like.

Arthur. Ah, indeed!

Roll. Blockhead that I was, I really thought that when she most abused, the most she loved me. False woman! mistaken Rolland! I should have continued thus dreaming on, for many a month, had I not been awakened one morning by the loud ringing of the parish bells.

Arthur. And that?

Roll. Was but to tell me, Arthur, she was wedded to another.

Arthur. Perfidious woman! false sex!

Roll. He who has ever truly loved, may guess what then I felt—what now I feel—at this unlucky season; excuse my saying any more. The parish bells! the parish bells! I hear them jingling in my ears at every corner. [*Exit hastily* ROLLAND.

Arthur. Poor Rolland, how I pity you; but your case makes me revert to myself. Yes, your tale revives in me! I will leave this place; I will not see this girl any more, she trifles with me—I was not originally a fool, however this idle passion may have metamorphosed me—I will make one resolve and be myself again!

LUCY *is heard singing behind the scenes.*

Ah! whither, ah! whither, can Damon be gone,
My true love, the gentle, the ruddy, the young?
I could think 'twas an age, tho' I saw him to-day,
I could think 'twas an age since the youth fled away.
Ah, haste thee, return! dear Damon, here fly,
Let me read of thy truth, in thy soul-beaming eye,

I ask no professions less truly they prove
That the youth whom I love, loves the girl I most love.

Arthur. Now to beware the magic of that voice, she sings of Damon and little thinks the hapless Arthur is so near.

Enter LUCY, *who looks surprised on seeing* ARTHUR.

Lucy. Now who would have dreamt of your being here?

Arthur. Not Lucy, I am certain. [*Gravely.*

Lucy. Why, how now, Arthur? what's your humour now?

Arthur. Not to be pleased with that which, from the beginning, was always satisfied with itself.

Lucy. Ho, ho! does Arthur rail against the sex?

Arthur. Perfidious sex; there is no sincerity amongst them, no dependance to be placed on the faith of any of them.

Lucy. Dear Arthur, what is it has disturbed you so much?

Arthur. [*Apart.*] Trust not that deceitful voice.

Lucy. Say, I entreat you, are you ill? do speak.

Arthur. Of Damon?

Lucy. [*Apart.*] Oh, ho! I have him now. But what of him?

Arthur. May he be blasted with keen disappointment.

Lucy. Ho, ho! what, dear Damon?

Arthur. Who is this Damon?

Lucy. What, not know Damon? I'll describe him then; neither is he too tall, nor yet too short, nature has cast him in that happy mould which pleases every mind—[*apparently admiring* ARTHUR *as she speaks.*]—his eyes are black as Arthur's, and, for the round luxuriant curls that grace his manly forehead, what can compare with them?

Arthur. S'death! can I hear more and brook the insult?

Lucy. Why, Arthur, surely you are mad.

Arthur. Mad! Oh, Rolland, it was thus—but no more; farewell, and for ever, I say.

[*Exit* ARTHUR.

[LUCY *looks after him some moments in astonishment, then supports herself against a tree.*

Lucy. Ah, what can all this mean? My heart sinks within me—my head turns round—can he be mad, indeed? I tremble in astonishment. Oh, distraction! What must I think?

ROLLAND *comes forward.*

Roll. That the men were deceivers ever, and that the woman who constantly distrusts them can never go wrong; this is the first principle I shall instill into the minds of my daughters, if ever I should have any, and depend upon it they will never be guilty of a false step—be assured a woman is very silly whenever she puts any confidence in man.

Lucy. And, believe me, I never shall again, no, never.

Roll. But, is it of Arthur you complain?

Lucy. Alas! I fear, indeed, that——

Roll. Oh, I have said too much against my own sex; he being in question, I do not intend, by any means, to include him with my evil brethren.

Lucy. You might not be much in error if you had done so. [*Going.*

Roll. Lean on my arm, you seem very faint.

Lucy. I wish to return home.

Roll. Come, come, do not droop; I seriously think that Arthur is a very good young man—'tis nothing but a fit of jealousy this—you know his temper. [*Exit* LUCY, *leaning on* ROLLAND'S *arm.*

SCENE III.—*The inside of a doctor's shop. Dr.* LINTON *busily employed in making up medicines—a boy waits, and puts letters and bottles into a basket.*

Dr. L. Here, take these draughts as directed; then call at Brown's with this blister; afterwards, carry the strengthening plaister to Miss Jenny Heartless, the leeches to the Alderman's, the corrective pills to the lawyer's; the balsam to the curate's.

Boy. Yes, Sir. Let me see; Brown's blister; Jenny Heartless's plaister; leech for the Alderman; correction for the deevil, say lawyer; drop of comfort for the poor parson; shan't forget, all right.

Dr. L. Sirrah, there must be no mistake; then, when you have delivered the medicines, call at Lady Vapor's, and tell her the steam-bath will be ready at six.

Boy. Very well, Sir. [*Boy takes the basket, repeating as he goes out.*] My Lady Steam Vapor Bath—all right. [*Exit.*

Dr. L. Now for the poor widow; by my holy art I will make a cure of her, and let her prayers be my reward: it is, I believe, the frequent prayers of the widow and the orphan that make me so happy; [*making up medicines.*] were it not, as friend Rolland says, that I am somewhat impatient, I do not think that there would be a happier man in existence—but here I see him coming for more medicine; I presume he pretends to take physic for the good of my family, and it is true that the half of that which I send him has not the honour of reaching his palate, for such is his faith in my medicines, that he cures himself with the very sight of the pills.

Enter ROLLAND, *a whip in his hand.*

Roll. With a heigh ho chevy! no more bolusses, the whole village will be poisoned, all these should have been made into pills, as small as pins heads.

[ROLLAND *whips off the counter several balls which the doctor had been preparing.*

Dr. L. S'death, Sir, this is too much; do you know what you have done here?—all these were for the widow Bentley, and I have no more of these ingredients in my shop—she will now be obliged to wait for several days for a supply, in the mean time, at the hazard of her life. Is this your charity to the community?

Roll. That's right, doctor, talk calmly, and you shall send the old woman a few golden pills from me by way of indemnification.

Enter hastily, and in agitation, a Servant.

Servant. Sir, your attendance is immediately required at Mr. Robinson's, Mr. Arthur is taken suddenly ill; pray be quick, we think he is dying.

[*Exit Servant.*

Roll. Ha, indeed!

Doctor L. [*running hastily about.*] Where is my case, where is my case?—dying! [*Going.*

Roll. Stop, stop; hear what I have to say, or you may kill him. [*Preventing him going.*

Doctor L. What do you mean, young man? Have you not heard that I am wanted on life and death?

Roll. I tell you, you cannot save his life if you do not hear me.

Dr. L. No, patience itself were madness now.

[*The Doctor takes pistols from the corner of his shop, and presents one to* ROLLAND.

Roll. Keep your temper.

Dr. L. I demand the satisfaction of a gentleman.

Enter hastily, and in evident alarm, another Servant.

Servant. Oh, Sir! make haste!

Dr. L. What, what is it?

Servant. Miss Gainsford, Sir, is dead, or very near it.

Dr. L. Oh, this is too much! [*the pistols drop from the Doctor's hands.*] too much!

Servant. Fly, dear Sir, I must fly. [*Exit Servant.*

Dr. L. Where is my partner? where is my assistant?

Roll. Here, Sir,—come with me, I will lead you to your patients—I will tell you what has happened—I see a man may carry a joke too far, but you can remedy all by one word—here is your case—we will go together, only keep your temper.

Dr. L. I am quite calm, indeed I am, I hope I may not be too late. [*Going.*

Roll. I will ensure you—fear nothing—only keep your temper; all will still be well; poor Arthur, poor Lucy. [*Exeunt together.*

SCENE IV.—*An apartment in Sir* JOHN AUBRETTE'S *house. Sir* JOHN, *Lady* AUBRETTE, GERTRUDE *netting. Lady* AUBRETTE *holds a ridiculous-looking hat in her hand.*

[*Sir* JOHN *writing.*

Lady Aub. And you will really swear that this witch of a hat was very becoming?

[*Sir* JOHN *looks up.*

Sir John. I swear you looked bewitching in it.

Gert. And so you think, Sir John, with everything Lady Aubrette wears.

Sir John. You are right, she would please me in the witch of Endor's garb.

Lady Aub. Oh! Sir John, you are the most provoking of men! [*Pulling the hat to pieces.*

Sir John. I will endeavour to improve, my love.
[*Continuing to write.*

Lady Aub. All this will not do, Sir John, this foolish calmness——

Sir John. I can be in a passion if provoked.

Lady Aub. Be assured you will never rule me, Sir John.

Sir John. My first wife and my second used to say the same.

Lady Aub. Now what can I do with this Bluebeard. [*Turning to* GERTRUDE.

Gert. Let me entreat——

Enter Richard.

Richard. Your horse is quite ready, Sir John.
[*Exit* Richard.

Sir John. Mighty good! I do not think that I shall be at home for some hours—[*looking at his watch.*]—compose your spirits, my love, for I repeat, I am afraid of your health suffering from these exertions.

Lady Aub. Oh, be assured I shall not live long, and, therefore, I recommend you to choose out of some collection of statues, your fourth wife, that there may be some similarity between you.

Sir John. Oh, as for that, minds may be similar without being congenial, and vice versa—but I will not keep my horse waiting any longer, for fear he should lose his temper. Good morning!

[*Bows and exit.*

Lady Aub. Now tell me, sweet Gertrude, do you think that such another icicle is to be found in this world?

Gert. Sir John is certainly the best tempered man in Christendom, he is never disturbed.

Lady Aub. Yes, it is that which provokes me so much; if I could but once succeed in putting him out of humour, I should feel myself indemnified for a world of chagrin. I am determined to aggravate him in some way or other.

Gert. And when you have done that——

Lady Aub. I may, perhaps, be inclined to follow good Mrs. Woodly's advice.

Gert. The sooner the better, I am persuaded, for all parties.

Lady Aub. Surely, his first wives must have been very easily managed, or he never would have ventured on a third; now I will make the task so difficult to him, that if I die, never, no, never will he wed again!

Enter Richard.

Richard. My lady, the stranger again requests to see your ladyship, and has given me this card.

[*Giving a card.*

Lady Aub. Shew him into the library immediately. Charming Mr. Gainsford—[*Exit* Richard.] I like this ardour and impatience above all tempers; how different is this from my icicle of a spouse.

Gert. Oh! my dear Lady Aubrette, let me entreat you—consider a moment what may be the consequence of all this trifling.

Lady Aub. Yes, indeed, I have considered in a moment—we shall have the most charming adventures.

Gert. Adventures! How, what sort of adventures?

Lady Aub. Not exactly bearing on the fashion of the day—something admirable! something new!

Gert. Explain.

Lady Aub. Why, perhaps I shall have a certain old father's consent to a projected marriage, before he even hears of the name of his intended daughter-in-law; ha, ha, ha! ha, ha!

Gert. Am I awake? I tremble. [*in the utmost astonishment.*] Oh, Lady Aubrette, what can all this mean?

Lady Aub. Only that you must lend me a little assistance in plaguing Sir John.

Gert. I see no wisdom in that; I beg to be excused.

Lady Aub. Oh, that is utterly impossible.

Gert. I am determined not to be concerned in any plot—I don't like adventures,

Lady Aub. But, my angelic Gertrude, you like to oblige your friends; come with me, then, and be assured you will rejoice in the end that you lent me your assistance in the beginning.

[*Lady* AUBRETTE *takes* GERTRUDE *by the arm and leads her out.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in Sir* JOHN AUBRETTE'S *house.*

Sir JOHN *entering*, Richard *following*.

Sir John. I must change these boots, set me another pair in the library—this is not all—stay one moment; [Richard *going*] you have packed up the wrong papers, and it is on this account that I have returned so immediately.

Richard. Sir John, I perceived the mistake a very short time after you left, and——

Sir John. As I passed the wall at the end of my grounds, I thought I perceived a stranger walking about, a person whom I never recollect having seen before; has any one entered my house since I went out?

Richard. Entered, Sir!

Sir John. Yes, Sir, do I not speak intelligibly?

Richard. Sir, yes, Sir, I quite understand, but pray do you mean any company, Sir John?

Sir John. [*apart*] I must keep my temper, patience! I mean. Has any one, man, woman, or child, entered this house since I went out? speak, instantly, why do you hesitate?

Richard. Oh! yes, indeed, Sir, there has been both and all, men, women, and children.

Sir John. And who, then, is that person that has been admitted into my grounds, that stranger?

Richard. I don't know, Sir, indeed, Sir.

Sir John. Speak the truth, Sir, at the peril of your place, I command you; have you opened the door to any stranger this day?

Richard. No, Sir, no, indeed—the porter opened the door, and I shewed him into my Lady's library, and this is truth, as I hope to keep my place.

Sir John. Very good—and now, what is this stranger's name?

Richard. I don't know, indeed, Sir John; upon my honor, I don't know his name, neither does the porter, and this is true, as I hope to keep my place.

Sir John. I shall certainly lose all patience. I believe, Sir, you know that I am a man of calm mind, but not the less determined; I have already said, that if I find any falsehood, you leave my house immediately. By what name is this stranger admitted?

Richard. By no name at all, Sir, indeed, upon my honor! upon my knees, I assure you, Sir John—— [Richard *kneels.*

Sir John. Rise, Sir, and tell me briefly, how, then, does he get in?

Richard. Why, Sir, just this way—he knocks at the door, with a kind of gentle sly tap, not at all like your honor's knock——

Sir John. Go on.

Richard. The porter opens the door, the young man gives a card, and he says take that to Lady Aubrette; and so the porter gives it to me, and I give it to my Lady, and my Lady says shew the stranger

into the library, and so, your honor, I shew him there, and sometimes they go directly into the grounds, and sometimes they stay in the library——

Sir John. Proceed.

Richard. Then, after a short time, Sir, I run up stairs into the store-room, and there I look out for your horse or carriage, and I stand so, your honor, that if any body past close to the house, they could not see that any one was on the watch, I stand so amazing cleverly.

[*Putting himself half behind a door to explain how he stands.*

Sir John. And, when you see my horse or carriage, what do you do then?

Richard. Then, Sir, I run hard drive above stairs, frequently in danger of breaking my neck, to tell the ladies you are coming, and then the stranger is let out through the garden, that's all.

Sir John. Very ridiculous, indeed.

Richard. So I think, Sir; and as it has happened, that you, Sir, returned, even before I got into my watch-room—well, of course, I had not time to let them know, and so, Sir, you got a sight of him.

Sir John. I certainly should be glad to know this stranger's name. [*Musing.*

Richard. So should I, Sir, for there is something very particular in him, indeed.

Sir John. How particular?

Richard. Why, Sir, I don't much think he's English, and yet if he be a foreigner, he's the handsomest foreigner I ever set eyes upon; I don't think I ever saw so handsome a young fellow in my life.

Sir John. Humph! And now I think of it, what is the reason you never informed me of this stranger's visits?

Richard. Her Ladyship, Sir, forbad us, at the peril of our lives.

Sir John. She did!

Richard. And if she should now discover that I have told, what may become of me?

Sir John. Trust me for that—upon my word this is a most ridiculous business, but I see how it is, this is some secret lover of Miss Stanley's, yes, yes, this is the reason why I am not to be informed.

Richard. I don't know how that may be, Sir, but, indeed, it is my Lady who always seems the most pleased to see the young gentleman, and Miss Stanley looks as if she did not half like my Lady's going on.

Sir John. Humph! humph! I should be glad to be acquainted with this stranger, for if indeed he be a foreigner, he may not be a proper acquaintance for Miss Stanley. Lady Aubrette must always have some adventure on the carpet; and this gentleman, I suppose, has been introduced by her Ladyship to Miss Stanley.

Richard. [*apart*] A good way of turning the business.

Sir John. And he is very frequent in his visits here?

Richard. Oh la! yes, Sir, he is never out of the house; always three minutes after you set out, Sir, he arrives; so I think, Sir John, he keeps as close watch over you as I do. In short, he seems as if he could not live away from us; and this is all, indeed,

Sir John, that I know of this business, as I hope to keep my place.

Sir John. I am perfectly satisfied that you have spoken the truth, I will now change my boots, these are much too tight, set me another pair immediately, I will then introduce myself to the gentleman.

Richard. I will, Sir, immediately. [*Apart.*] Very easy indeed in the tight boots. [*Exit.*

Sir John. This is the most incomprehensible, the most mysterious affair!—thank heaven, I have not betrayed myself to my servant!—let out at the garden gate—handsome young man—forbid to inform me at the peril of his life! but let me be calm, let me be patient—yet, indeed, these adventures become so very general in this age, that a man cannot be too prompt in looking about him. I must investigate the business without delay. I will change these boots, and instantly set about it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden Scene.* GERTRUDE *and* GILBERT *walking—they stop in front of the Scene.*

Gil. Just so, my dear Gertrude, are the walks laid out at Comberley; and at this very season, at this very hour, Lucy, my father and myself are accustomed to stroll, and——

Gert. Is the surrounding landscape equal to this?

Gil. The landscape, the air, the society, all is inferior.

Gert. Which way has Lady Aubrette turned? Let us look for her.

Gil. No, no, she fatigues me to death; I am not well enough to bear her excessive spirits.

Gert. You have, indeed, some fatigue in coming here, but tell me, does not Mrs. Woodly complain of your repeated absence?

Gil. She thinks I am paying my devotions at the shrine of inanimate beauty, at the feet of the statues of the Venus di Medicis, the Apollos, the Antinous, the Laocoon!—she forgets that I am her nephew, that I have a heart, that——

Gert. Pardon me, Sir, if I wish that you resembled her more; then, I am certain, you would not so long submit to Lady Aubrette's folly in clandestinely coming here—how may all this end?

Gil. How should it end but well? besides, did she not bind me in the first instance to secrecy?—and, in the meantime, can I forget my obligations to her?—can I forget that whilst I am, indeed, fatiguing myself on the one side in contributing to her amusement, I am, on the other hand, procuring for myself the greatest of all earthly blessings?—Sweet Gertrude, ask your own heart how you would have acted in such a case.

Gert. Like you, I might have been guilty of an error in the first instance, but in the second, I would perceive it, I would acknowledge, I would correct it.

Enter hastily Lady AUBRETTE.

Lady Aub. Dear Gertrude, retire a little, Sir John is unexpectedly returned; he will be coming here; leave Mr. Gainsford to my care a few minutes.

Gert. O! most willingly, dear madam.

[*Exit* GERTRUDE.

Gil. [*apart*] S'death and confusion to Sir John.

Lady Aub. Sir John is inquiring for me—I expect him every moment—now I shall certainly provoke him, and if his attachment is as Mrs. Woodly pretends, he must certainly have a fit of jealousy.

[GILBERT *muttering in evident impatience.*

Lady Aub. Yes, he must be out of humour for once in his life. [*Turning to* GILBERT.] My dear Sir, we will enter this shady walk, you must talk and laugh very loud. My maid has overheard some discourse, he intends to play the scout.

Gil. Madam, I cannot laugh. [*Very gravely.*

Lady Aub. Mighty good! I will laugh for you, then: ha, ha, ha! come along, ha, ha, ha!

Gil. S'death and confusion to Sir John!

Lady Aub. Ha, ha, ha! excellent! that is just what you should say, that will do exactly.

[*Lady* AUBRETTE *takes* GILBERT'S *arm, and apparently dragging him along, they enter a shady walk.*

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. I have secured the gates, but let me proceed softly, for he might, in an emergency, leap the wall.

[*Sir* JOHN *listens attentively, and hears Lady* AUBRETTE *laughing and talking very loud.*

Lady Aub. My dear Sir, this project is the most

delightful in the world, I do not expect the tyrant home to-night! Ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. [*apart*] Good! but I have resolved to keep my temper.

Gil. S'death and confusion to Sir John! Would there were no such person!

Sir John. [*apart*] Better still.

Lady Aub. And, were he unexpectedly to arrive this evening, before he has time to take off his boots, I can secret you in a closet which he never enters, and where you may repose very comfortably all night.

Sir John. [*apart*] Indeed!

Gil. I pray heaven he may not stay.

Lady Aub. And to-morrow, being levee day, he must be very early in town, and then we shall have full opportunity to decamp—ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. [*apart*] If this be not enough to provoke a man—but, perhaps, I dream.

Gil. Oh my angelic friend! perverse interruption.

Lady Aub. I wonder if the creature would feel his misfortune.

Gil. [*not attending to her*] Torture inexpressible, to be deprived of your sight, even for an hour —confusion to Sir John.

Sir John. [*apart*] I can scarcely believe my senses, but I will see by whom I am likely to be so much honored.

Lady Aub. His case is by no means an uncommon one, he will have that consolation—ha, ha!

Sir John. [*apart*] Heaven and earth! is it possible?

[*Sir* JOHN *bursts into the walk from which the voices proceed.—Lady* AUBRETTE *is seen to run from walk to walk, as if endeavouring to conceal herself, Sir* JOHN *still pursuing, at length they all meet in front of the Stage—*GILBERT *is confused—Lady* AUBRETTE *affects to be so.*

Sir John. I must confess a very handsome subject, as my servant said. [*apart.—Looking at them stedfastly.*] "To-morrow being Levee day, we shall have full opportunity to decamp together!"—Young man! let me instantly know your name, if your respectability be such as to entitle me to take the satisfaction of a gentleman.

Lady Aub. [*to* GILBERT] Do not, do not betray me!

Gil. What can I say? Would to heaven he had not come!

Sir John. I demand to be informed, by what means you got introduced to this house; and, unless you wish that certain officers should take you into custody, you will do well to let me hear the truth: who are you? what motives led you here?

Gil. The most sincere—the most ardent—the most unconquerable passion!

Lady Aub. Bravissimo! there's the truth, as you would have it.

Sir John. Merciful heaven! can man be so bewitched?

Gil. I know no pleasure but in her society, and if I am to be deprived of that, death at your

hands, death in any shape would be welcome to me.

Lady Aub. Charming. [*apart*] This is much better than I expected.

Sir John. Oh my heart! Is this to be endured with calmness?

Gil. What is life, without the object that we love?

Sir John. Young man, hear me; in any other situation, under any different circumstances, your countenance would have pleaded for you—even now I feel for you a sentiment of pity—yes, this mad woman has seduced you from the path of virtue. I am sensible of my misfortune; I regret that you are her dupe.

Gil. Ah! how can that be? how can that be?

Sir John. Promise me never to see her more!

Gil. What? abandon her! no never! never! never!

Lady Aub. Ha, ha, ha! [*apart*] This is charming.

Sir John. Reflect, young man, a few moments on the consequence of an intercourse of this kind.

Gil. I have reflected, have maturely weighed, and I see nothing less than a heaven upon earth in the union of two hearts that were evidently formed for each other.

Lady Aub. Are you content with the truth?

Sir John. "S'death and confusion to Sir John," indeed!

Gil. [*turning to Lady* AUBRETTE] Madam, what is this? explain, how does it so concern him?

Sir John. You feel, then, no reproach of conscience; you see no guilt in your passion?

Gil. Guilt! astonishing! guilt! oh perversion of that sacred emanation of all that breathes of heaven! what madness! can an attachment like mine thus be construed? what does he mean by guilt?

[*To Lady* AUBRETTE.

Sir John. I mean, Sir, that though her husband is a man of a calm mind, he knows how to resent an injury as a man of honor, nor will he be tardy in seeking that redress which such injuries demand, and which justice, the laws of his country, will not fail to give him. You will, I presume, Sir, leave me your address, before you take your departure.

[*Exit Sir* JOHN.

Lady Aub. Ha, ha, ha! was ever any thing so excellent? oh, how much I am obliged to you—how much better you have performed than I expected!

[GILBERT *appears lost in thought, and, not hearing her, exclaims*——

Gil. Resent an injury! her husband a man of honor!—husband! oh, distraction! can it be possible? yes, it is, doubtless, too true—does any one even know her name, or history? oh, I am lost! undone!

Lady Aub. [*approaching him in great surprise.* In the name of pity, Mr. Gainsford, what is the matter with you? what can you mean?

Gil. Mean, Madam! I mean that if Gertrude be already married as he pretends, what have I more to do in this world?

Lady Aub. Ho, ho, ho! I shall certainly expire —why you have totally forgotten the whole plot— it is Sir John Aubrette who has just left us--my very immaculate spouse! it is I that am married, it is you of whom he is jealous, and when you talked of the most amiable and intelligent of beings, he thought that you meant his wife all the time, and so did I, upon my honor! ha, ha, ha, ha! there never was any thing better than this.

Gil. Oh, my heart! can I have been so much bewildered? could I so far forget myself?

Lady Aub. Ah, you see what it is to be seriously in love!—but, only recollect, that I engaged you to act with me to make Sir John jealous; and I most heartily thank you, you have done it to admiration!

Gil. Ah, now, indeed, I have some recollection, but do you not fear the consequences for yourself?

Lady Aub. The consequence will be, that I shall have to laugh at Sir John and his jealousy all the rest of my life; ha, ha, ha!

Gil. Still, Lady Aubrette, I have some doubts —some apprehension on my mind—you know that there is something mysterious in the fate of your friend; and then, from the manner in which she receives my attentions, I hardly dare flatter myself that they are agreeable to her.

Lady Aub. But you must make some allowances for a certain timidity of character, which makes her doubly interesting, and then your short acquaintance——

Gil. All that I could admit, were I but assured that I am not indifferent to her.

Lady Aub. Then be assured from me; you may

very well suppose that I am in her confidence, and, *entre nous*, she has told me fifty times, that, should there be any family objections, she could not survive the disappointment.

Gil. Then, by all that earth contains, there shall not be any!

Lady Aub. Hush, hush, be calm, not a word of this to her, she would never forgive me.

Gil. But, do you not deceive, do you not flatter me?

Lady Aub. Why, what an incredulous being thou art! but come, let us look for her, she can at least convince you that that person is my husband, and who, I suppose, is now puzzling his brains to find out your name in vain—what a charming adventure we shall have.

Gil. I am confused at all this——

Lady Aub. Come along; I see you are musing again.

[*Exeunt together, Lady* AUBRETTE *taking* GILBERT *by the arm.*

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Sir* JOHN AUBRETTE'S *house. The library. Sir* JOHN, Richard.

Sir John. And they have not yet entered the house?

Richard. No, Sir John; but I observed them turn into the avenue, as if intending to come in.

Sir John. 'Tis well, hasten with this card you have given me to Miss Stanley, marked G. G., say merely, the gentleman waits in the library—[*Exit*

Richard.] if, after what has passed, a shadow of doubt could remain upon my mind, I should find truth and conviction here. What an unexpected blow! giddy, violent, and capricious, I dreamt not of guilt! yet fiercely to rage will not alleviate the weight of my misfortune.

Enter hastily GERTRUDE, *speaking as she enters.*

Gert. Oh, Mr. Gainsford, I must entreat——

Sir John. Ah, indeed! Gainsford is then his name, I now know against whom I have to act.

Gert. Oh! pardon me, pardon me, Sir John, indeed these clandestine proceedings were very contrary to my wishes; I have a thousand times requested Lady Aubrette would cease.

[*Throws herself into a chair in an agitated manner.*

Sir John. Compose yourself, Miss Stanley, and understand me—that you should be found abetting a system of conduct like this, excites my astonishment, my pity, my indignation; you, whom I imagined so superior to all that I had hitherto met with—what excuse can you offer? what atonement can you make?

Gert. Oh, Sir John! pity me, pardon me; you cannot be more offended with me than I am with myself; I beseech you forbid Mr. Gainsford's visits here, or allow me immediately to return to Mrs. Woodly—but no! I cannot, I dare not, I dread her resentment—where shall I fly? which way shall I turn? [*Bursts into tears.*

Sir John. Yes, this distress is more than all con-

vincing; let me recommend you, Miss Stanley, to compose yourself, and consider that I am the greatest sufferer—all that you can now do is, to remain with that unfortunate woman till you have my further orders. I must now consult my solicitor, and you shall soon know my determination—you have acted improperly, but your mind is not corrupted—[*Sir* JOHN, *as he is going out.*]—tell Lady Aubrette, if we meet again, it will be to part for ever.

Gert. What can this mean? what do I hear? stay, Sir John, I entreat you—[*endeavouring to detain him.*]—only one word.

Sir John. No, I cannot hear any more, you have convinced me of everything. [*Exit Sir* JOHN.

Gert. What strange conviction darts across my mind! Oh, Lady Aubrette, you are lost for ever—he is deceived. I have contributed to strengthen his error—my heart will break, but let me fly—let me send some one after him to tell him; [*going, meets* Richard *entering.*] Oh, run, Sir, I beseech you; fly after Sir John; tell him he is deceived, tell him it is I that——

Richard. Deceived! la, ma'am, Sir John knows that to his cost; besides, his horse was waiting for him, and he set off full gallop, I doubt if anything human could overtake him.

Gert. Oh, my unfortunate friend! what will become of you?—this is all my fault—why did I not in the first instance apprise Sir John—I shall lose my senses!

Richard. Indeed, ma'am, I think we were all to

blame there, [*Exit* GERTRUDE, *unperceived by* Richard, *who continues, as he thinks, to address her.*] but my lady is so very headstrong, one never knows what to do for the best; but, were I in Sir John's place, I would not, by any means, have a divorce! I don't approve of these divorces—no doubt it is what she and Mr. G. would most like, and really it is encouraging these mischiefs—I would just allow her ladyship a scanty separate maintenance, and, if starving would not do more towards bringing them to their senses, than all the laws and divorces, my name's not Richard; and, between you and I, ma'am, it was always my opinion that my lady was a little too free with the bottle, that is, I mean if she took a little less, we servants should not be battered about so much, that's all—pray, ma'am, can you tell me the name of this gentleman who has raised such a hurly-burly here? [*he stops a moment, then looks round with surprise.*] Hey day! what, gone! run after Sir John, I wager; why we shall have nothing but elopements. Molly, Jenny, Betty, Billy, Sally, Polly, Tommy, Harry, here's news for you!

[*Exit* Richard.

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in Sir* JOHN AUBRETTE'S *house.*

Enter GERTRUDE, GILBERT *following.*

Gil. Come, come, let us talk no more of Sir John, it is time enough to be miserable when assured he cannot be convinced.

Gert. But if, before he has seen Mrs. Woodly —before you have seen her—before any explanation can have taken place—he should send you a challenge——

Gil. As I live to adore you, I will not accept it —I swear!

Gert. That all appaling word, coward——

Gil. Has no terrors, when your happiness is in question.

Gert. But it is Lady Aubrette's peace of mind that is now the question; fly, then, I entreat you, to Mrs. Woodly, beg her instantly to see Sir John—she alone can convince him—tell her all the truth.

Gil. I will do all; I will do every thing that you wish.

Gert. Then I am persuaded you will not clandestinely come here again.

Gil. Why so harshly stigmatize a conduct, which you know in the first instance was inevitable. Sweet Gertrude, ask your own heart what you would have done in such a case.

Gert. I would retrieve it—but tell me candidly, do you not doubt that Mrs. Woodly will disapprove of your visits?

Gil. No! I have no doubt, I am too well convinced! Why did she conceal from you that I was expected at her house? Why did she send you away on my arrival? Why, but for this reason? I suspect you have no fortune—she thinks I have a heart to appreciate excellence, an understanding to discern it—she, with a thousand good qualities, has, perhaps, one failing, avarice, the vice of the age.

Gert. I tremble as I think; I cannot help remarking with you the peculiarity of her conduct of late—but be persuaded she has some solid reasons —our mutual interest is so concerned.

Gil. Be persuaded! No, by all that earth contains, nor man nor woman shall persuade me!

Gert. Ah, reflect a moment; may there not be some mysterious cause? Do I know at this moment who I am? Is not my very name called in question?

Gil. Pshaw, pshaw! a name's a name. What do I care for a name? Black, Brown, or White, it is my sole, my whole ambition still to change it.

Gert. I have but one remark more to make—in all sincerity I ought to make it—I feel assured that there must be some secret attached to my history —I have repeatedly resolved to inquire of Mrs. Woodly the particulars of my story, and as repeatedly my words have faltered on my tongue—tears have interrupted my purpose, whilst my benefactress has always appeared to guess the cause of my concern, and has hastily left the room.

Gil. 'Tis very strange! very strange! [*Apart.*] Suppose it should be as some persons have hinted—my fair cousin!

Gert. It confounds conjecture itself—but hasten to Mrs. Woodly, perhaps she may think proper to confide to one of her own family what she does not seem willing to communicate to me.

Gil. Yes, I will fly! she must speak! this suspense cannot be endured!

Gert. And oh! remember first Lady Aubrette. It is I who am accountable for all the evil that may

hence occur to her; if I had had the courage to inform Mrs. Woodly of these proceedings, the consequences, the still uncertain consequences might have been evaded—I feel it is possible I may still be your murderer — Sir John Aubrette's — perhaps both! I feel that every moment's delay endangers the happiness — the lives of all — of every one in this house! I cannot close my eyes till I know that Sir John Aubrette is informed of the real cause of your visits here.

Gil. I understand—no more! Farewell—I will return promptly, or write—farewell——

[*Exit, hastily,* GILBERT.

Gert. Farewell! there's death in that same word;—return quickly, did he say?—what strange forebodings seize me! I know not what to think—have I raised a hope in the bosom of another, which imperious duty may, in the end, oblige me to disappoint?—but peace, my heart, I cannot, I must not be led by any selfish feeling to interrupt the happiness of my more than parent! No, my dear benefactress, sooner than betray you in an affair so near and dear to you as the honor, the respectability of your nephew, I would fly from that society in which you have taught me so much good, so much happiness! I may, perhaps, be the offspring of some unfortunate being, whom pure charity may have caused you to pity and protect, but whom to ally with one of your family were indeed to degrade your dignity—virtue, it is true, can ennoble us all; education, talent, merit, equalize conditions—but that is not to be my ar-

gument; no! it is gratitude that I owe you; it is respect for your very prejudices, that I am to cherish; and, whoever I am, my obligations to you are the same. Your daughter I cannot be; no, no! that is utterly impossible! you lament, it is true, when I mourn, you rejoice if any circumstance gives a new spring to my happiness; but it is because associated with your cares and your pleasures, existing only in your smiles, I am become a link in the chain of your being, and the long exercise of your tenderness has refined your affection to the very subtilty of maternal feeling.

[*Exit* GERTRUDE.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sir* RUPERT GAINSFORD'S *house. Sir* RUPERT *and* LUCY. *A servant brings in a letter and exit—Sir* RUPERT *takes the letter.*

Sir Rupert. Let's see, let's see.

[LUCY *looking at the direction.*

Lucy. Is that Mrs. Woodly's writing? yes—no —yes it is.

Sir Rupert. That of course, as I have not any other correspondent in that quarter. [*Reads.*]

"My very dear Sir Rupert,—[*coughs*] I must request you will not be surprised or alarmed at what I have to communicate, I say alarmed, as I well know your parental anxiety might lead you, before you had well considered circumstances, to conclude the business in question a hasty inconsiderate proceeding—I have, however, much pleasure in informing you, that your son is going to be married——"

What, without my consent? and to some poor orphan, may be! [*apart*] now come my punishments!

Lucy. Oh, papa, pray go on, her fortune will be coming.

Sir Rupert. [*Continuing*] "Going to be married to a very amiable young lady whom I have known

for many years, no one can be more calculated to render him happy." Fudge, fudge, fudge—what's her fortune?

Lucy. How charming it will be to have a sister! go on, papa;

Sir Rupert. "At the death of a certain old lady, who is now advanced in years, she will inherit an immense property."—Oh, ho, ho, so, so!

[*Takes a pinch of snuff.*

Lucy. Certainly, papa, that will do.

Sir Rupert. But these old women live for ever!

Lucy. La, papa!

Sir Rupert. [*reads*]—"her father and mother are dead, and she lives with this same old lady, my most particular friend. All parties are perfectly agreeable to the match, and we only wait your much desired consent, for Gilbert to espouse the amiable Gertrude. You will, perhaps, object to the shortness of this acquaintance; but you must consider, my dear Sir, that as I have known the lady these twenty years, I speak from conviction, that the choice which Gilbert has thus made so decidedly in the first instance, could never be improved by a ten years dilly-dally shilly-shally courtship in the second. Excuse all incorrectness, I write in the greatest haste. Direct to me under cover, to Sir John Aubrette, M. P., Belle Vue Lodge, Richmond, where we shall probably remain all the summer.

"*April* 1*st.* "Yours very truly,

M. W."

Lucy. Delightful, papa!

Sir Rupert. Dilly-dally shilly-shally! — why surely this mad boy has infected his aunt.

Lucy. Dear papa, do sit down and write an answer immediately, delays are dangerous, here is some paper, and here is a most excellent pen.

Sir Rupert. Let me see then. [*Sir* RUPERT *sits and begins to write*] "My very dear madam"—

[*Writing and speaking.*

Lucy. Here are your spectacles, papa.

[*Sir* RUPERT *puts them on.*

Enter ROLLAND *and Dr.* LINTON.—LUCY *signs to them to keep in the back ground*

Sir Rupert. "As throughout your life you have been considered to have acted with the greatest prudence, I scruple not to leave you sole arbitress with regard to the fate of my son, in this most important of all concerns, the choice of a wife, and with your usual discretion, see that no imposition be practised with regard to the fortune of my intended daughter-in-law—for you must feel assured, that when once the knot is tied, it is for better, and for worse. Depending, therefore, entirely on your great foresight, experience, and caution, I give my formal consent to the marriage, and in the hope of speedily seeing you all in this part of the world, I remain, my dear sister,

"Your very affectionate brother,

GAINSFORD."

[LUCY *rings a bell previous to the conclusion of the letter, she speaks to a Servant, who goes out and*

returns with a light, which he places on the back ground, and remains there himself.

Lucy. Charming, papa! nothing can be better penned, let us immediately send it; here is my seal.

[*Sir* RUPERT *folds the letter.*

Sir Rupert. Pooh, pooh, that will not do, where are my arms?

Lucy. [*Looking about.*] Oh! where in the name of pity shall I find the arms? [*Moving about.*

Sir Rupert. "To Mrs. Woodly—To Sir John Aubrette, M.P., Belle Vue Lodge, Richmond.

Lucy. Here they are, here they are!

[LUCY *giving the seal and the light, Sir* RUPERT *seals the letter.*

Sir Rupert. [*Repeating.*] "At the death of an old lady, she will inherit an immense property!"

[*Gives* LUCY *the letter, she gives it to the Servant in waiting; exit hastily Servant.*

Lucy. Fly, fly, it is post time.

Sir Rupert. A plum at least I suppose—O Gilbert! thou lucky boy! [*Looking out after Servant.*

Lucy. Now it is safe.

Sir Rupert. But I ought to know in what this immense property consists, whether in land, freehold, copyhold, in the four per cents, or if it lies—

ROLLAND *coming forward.*

Roll. At the bottom of the ocean.

[LUCY *and Dr.* LINTON *converse.*

Sir Rupert. Why, what are you doing here?

Roll. I am just come on the most benevolent

errand possible, yes, rattle as I am, when doing a real service is in question I know how to lay aside all trifling, and, as I suppose no one else will dare to tell you——

Sir Rupert. Tell what? out with it; what is it?

Roll. Your son, Sir Rupert, I hear is going to be married to a lady of 50,000*l.* per ann., some people would have you believe, but the general opinion is, that she has not fifty pence.

Sir Rupert. Oh, woe is me! woe is me! and I have given my consent—where is my letter, give me my letter.

Lucy. Oh, papa! it is all false—the letter is in the post. [ROLLAND *motions to* LUCY.

Roll. It is confidently reported that the story of the fortune is a mere humbug, trumped up to deceive some avaricious relations. I call upon you, Sir, to assert, if you have not heard word for word, the story I have just related.

[*Turning to Dr.* LINTON *who comes forward.*

Dr. L. Word for word, precisely as it has been told to the present company.

Sir Rupert. I shall go mad! Oh Gilbert, thou degenerate boy!

Roll. Thus the business is detailed: he fell in love at the first sight, the second made a declaration of his passion on his knees, the third offered his hand, the fourth obtained the lady's consent, the fifth bought the licence, the sixth—I will not vouch for the truth—they say he wedded!

[*Sir* RUPERT *rings the bell in great agitation.*

Enter a Servant.

Sir Rupert. Let my travelling carriage be got ready instantly, there must not be any delay! [*Exit Servant.*] I will be there before the letter, if possible—I will know the truth—I will stop these proceedings.

Dr. L. But, Sir Rupert, may not all this be village slander?

Sir Rupert. Prove that it is so, I will set off the same.

Lucy. Dear papa, consider my aunt's letter.

Roll. Give me leave to look at that, it will enable me to contradict the statement at least, and, if true, it is his father's business only.

[ROLLAND *takes the letter and reads.*

Lucy. My aunt would not deceive you, papa.

Sir Rupert. Thy aunt, good-tempered woman, has been imposed upon—be directly ready to set off with me. Doctor, I pray your attendance—my daughter's sudden recovery may be followed by a relapse as extraordinary.

Dr. L. You do me honor, Sir Rupert, I shall have much pleasure in attending you.

Roll. Excuse me, Sir, but will you swear that this is Mrs. Woodly's writing?

Sir Rupert. I will swear nothing, but that I am undone!

Roll. No one at least can be taxed here for a forgery, for the devil of any proper signature is to be found, save and excepting the 1st of April, and two crooked initials, that may pass for any thing.

Lucy. Upon my honor it is so!

[*Looking at the letter.*

Sir Rupert. Well, well, I will travel all night.

[*Looking also at the letter.*

Lucy. Dear papa, let Arthur go with us; he will, perhaps, persuade my brother to return.

Sir Rupert. I care not, so there be no delay; fly, then,—[*Exit* LUCY.]—would I could fly. Oh, Gilbert, thou degenerate boy! [*Exit Sir* RUPERT.

Roll. Gad! I shall be there as soon as any of you;—now for a *coup de main*—one frolic more, and then you are all settled.

Dr. L. This letter is a most incomprehensible business after all.

Roll. Very strange, indeed, I can only swear it is not my writing.

Dr. L. But I must wish you good morning, I must seek my portmanteau and my pistols.

Roll. No, no! give me the pistols, you are not quite cured; with a heigh, ho, chevy! hark forward, hark forward, tantivy! [*Exeunt together.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Mrs.* WOODLY'S *House.*

Enter GILBERT, Patrick *following.*

Pat. This is all, your honor, that ever I heard of the matter.

Gil. I am satisfied of that,—tell Mrs. Woodly I must speak to her immediately.

Pat. Your honor is heartily welcome; sure she will come directly. [*Exit* Patrick.

Gil. Be still, my fears; what is the worst that can be expected in this case? poverty—poverty! I am enamoured of the very sound for her sake. Of the cousinship I must still take leave to doubt,—but what if that were possible—there would not, in that case, be any obstacle, the very law allows it, blessed be the law! I shall not have to contend with that in this instance; [*walks about in an agitated manner*] yet, spite of all these self-evident consolations, I still feel like a condemned criminal a few hours before execution; she delays, can she be gone out. [*Rings the bell hastily.*

Enter Patrick.

Is not Mrs. Woodly at home?

Pat. Sure, your honor, I saw her on the stairs this minute, coming down to you. [*Exit* Patrick.

Enter Mrs. WOODLY.

Mrs. Wood. Dear Gilbert, I rejoice to see you: his town has, of course, so many attractions for an inquiring mind, that till you have seen all that is to be seen, I suppose we must not hope for more o your society.

Gil. I am obliged for your so accounting for my absence, but——

Mrs. Wood. You do not seem well, I am afraid you over-fatigue yourself in your daily researches.

Gil. I am oppressed with the weight of my own, and other people's business.

Mrs. Wood. Pray explain.

Gil. I think it very probable that a challenge may be sent for me to this house.

Mrs. Wood. You alarm me——

Gil. Dismiss all apprehension on that head, and be assured I am not mad enough to accept it; no sentiment of fictitious honor shall ever tempt me to raise my hand in such a way against the life of another! If I am the aggressor, ought I to add to the injury given, by attempting to murder the being I have aggrieved? If, on the contrary, I am the insulted person, am I to be so devoid of Christian charity and forgiveness, that nothing but a life atonement will satiate my vengeance?

Mrs. Wood. Oh! you relieve my mind.

Gil. The true hero knows how to brave public opinion in such a case, to despise all those self-created maxims of fashionable morality, which have no origin in reason, which are at variance with the common laws of humanity. I would prove my valour in facing the foes of my country, and fools may mock if they will, at my declining to murder in cool blood an irritated or offended neighbour.

Mrs. Wood. With such sentiments, I can fear nothing for you.

Gil. And when the life of such a man as Sir John Aubrette is in question——

Mrs. Wood. Sir John Aubrette! I am lost in astonishment—explain, I entreat you.

Gil. It is a ridiculous business—you perhaps already know that Lady Aubrette——

Mrs. Wood. Lady Aubrette!

[*Appearing alarmed.*

Gil. Yes, Lady Aubrette—Sir John I find has not yet been here, but he preceded me into town; I am just returned from his house.

Mrs. Wood. Did I hear right? from his house—from Richmond? [*Very much agitated.*

Gil. From his house—from Richmond, madam! [*Mrs.* WOODLY *leans against the side of the stage.*]

Gil. [*Apart.*] Oh! this strange alarm doubles my anxiety like a death-stroke, and chills my very utterance. Indeed you are ill! shall I call for assistance?

Mrs. Wood. No! it is nothing, a sudden faintness—you spoke of Lady Aubrette.

[GILBERT *draws chairs and they sit.*

Gil. She has long wished to put her husband out of humour, doubting if it were possible—and very opportunely to serve her purpose, I arrived from the country, and every day, and sometimes every hour, I have been her visitor.

Mrs. Wood. Oh!

Gil. Incapable of giving him any real cause of jealousy, she has only been the more active and ingenious in performing the part of the faithless wife. Sir John has this morning taken the alarm, and you, madam, are perhaps the only person that can convince him of the real state of the case—tell him all the truth.

Mrs. Wood. Indeed I shall have much pleasure in undeceiving him; I am persuaded, too, I shall be the first whom he will consult on the business.

Gil. Tell him that I submitted to his wife's folly, to procure myself the society of another individual—that the real—the only object of all my visits to his house——

Mrs. Wood. Oh, my presaging heart! oh deadly thought, who can it be but——

[*In the greatest agitation.*

Gil. Gertrude! Who should it be but Gertrude?

Mrs. Wood. Oh! horror! horror! speak—ease my bursting heart—Oh! say you are not married!

Gil. I am not married, madam.

Mrs. Wood. Thank heaven! thank heaven! I am most thankful. Oh say! pronounce that word again; is it true? is it most true?

Gil. I have said it is true! true that I am come this very morning to seek a licence, to inquire of you her name; but what do I care for a name? to-morrow it is mine! I'll take her with the one you have been pleased to let her have these two and twenty years.

Mrs. Wood. [*Not appearing to hear him.*] Oh pitying fate, we have escaped! all, all escaped!

Gil. Hear me, madam, and explain why all this rejoicing that I am not married—hear me, and believe; I am deaf to the calls of ambition, to the subterfuges of avarice, to the threats of disinheritance!

Mrs. Wood. Alas! indeed it cannot be!

Gil. Tell me that she is destitute of all worldly goods, all earthly possessions—tell me that this immaculate being whom you have so long protected, is the offspring of some humble menial, whom you

thought proper to adopt from pure charitable motives—tell me, I say, that she is destitute of all worldly goods—that the wide canopy of heaven will be my only covering—tell me—but why do I delay? I came here to inquire her real name; madam, I care no more about it, to-morrow it is mine! [*Going.*

Mrs. Wood. Oh rash! Oh madly rash! it cannot be! [*detaining him*] she is, indeed, your sister!

Gil. No, no, no, no, no, no!

[*Starting back in horror and beating his forehead distractedly.*

Mrs. Wood. Ah! I have been too abrupt—dear Gilbert, pardon me; only think we have escaped the evil.

Gil. Ah! I feel I have not escaped!

Mrs. Wood. How can I forgive myself? what can I do?

Gil. Speak; I am calmer, let me hear the story, convince me beyond all hope or doubt of my misfortune.

Mrs. Wood. But how shall I relate the failings of a father to his son?

Gil. Were they not already half proclaimed?

Mrs. Wood. Let it be sufficient to say I marked the distant spot, where the deluded, mourning, and repentant wanderer strayed, and sent repeatedly assistance to her.

Gil. Excellent friend!

Mrs. Wood. And when I found that the cares of a nurse were no longer necessary; I sent for the child, resolved most strictly to perform the duty so shamefully evaded by the father!

Gil. Oh! that was kind and generous; Heaven will reward the deed.

Mrs. Wood. Sir Rupert thinks me ignorant of the whole affair; it was on this account that you were also unacquainted. Oh! but I must be thankful that my good intentions have not been fatal to us all! I breathe again—I am most thankful!

Gil. Can that man think there is an after-reckoning, who thus can act? give an existence, and leave it all the evil chance of perishing eternally, nor make one feeble effort to preserve it from destruction?

Mrs. Wood. Alas, indeed!

Gil. Then there's the wretched mother from her home seduced, abandoned by all her natural protectors, the path of reformation half closed upon her; oh! my father, it is not I that should reproach you, but may my sins never be sins like these.

Mrs. Wood. Amen!

Gil. Oh Gertrude! proud had I been to own you as my sister—unhappy Gilbert, that can never be.

Mrs. Wood. [*Apart*] I tremble to hear him.

Gil. Did I tell you that I would return quickly? did I dream that I was so near all that my fancy had formed of happiness in this world? did I hope for a moment, only to despair for ever? Sir John Aubrette, I am ready at least to meet your fire, if not to return it. Oh! I think I could joyfully receive it—mine is a calamity without hope—an affliction for which no remedy can be found!

[*Exit* GILBERT.

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Mrs. Wood. Oh! this seeming state of calmness is beyond all alarming—to what may it not lead? I must hasten to send some one after him, to observe his steps—my heart sinks within me—I must send for Sir John.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Sir John Aubrette, madam, requests to have some private conversation with you immediately, if you please—he waits in the library.

[*Exit Servant.*

Mrs. Wood. He can, perhaps, direct me.

[*Exit Mrs.* WOODLY.

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Sir* JOHN AUBRETTE'S *House.*

Enter Lady AUBRETTE; *she rings a bell, and enter* Richard.

Lady Aub. Pray did Sir John leave any orders with regard to his return when he went away?

Richard. Not any, my lady; he only desired me not to sit up.

Lady Aub. Send Miss Stanley here. [*Exit* Richard.] It will be a little ridiculous, if he begins to make the matter public without farther inquiry. I am convinced I have carried the joke too far——

Enter GERTRUDE.

Oh, patience! you have been weeping!

Gert. I am shocked to think that we have not yet had any tidings of Sir John.

Lady Aub. Come, come, do not distress yourself about Sir John, he has long been trying to conquer me, and, at the last, you will see that I shall come off victorious.

Gert. Pardon me, Lady Aubrette, but I do not think Sir John will ever return to this house.

Lady Aub. Oh, I dare say he will be returning in a few hours, and, in the mean time, I intend that you and Mr. Gainsford shall be clandestinely married, by way of crowning the joke against him.

Gert. Clandestinely, married, Lady Aubrette! I revolt at the thought!—no, believe me, I would never enter that family, where I could not be received with open arms.

Lady Aub. Ho, ho! what a natural it is! but be assured that these sentiments will not do for real life.

Gert. I can, however, act most strictly in consonance.

Lady Aub. That, indeed, I do not doubt—yet, to prove to you how little exercise there will be for your delicate scruples, look here, [*taking a letter out of her pocket*] here is the old papa's consent point blank! what do you think of that? look at the signature, — GAINSFORD, — away now with all romantic negatives; can you suppose that the old baron would desire any thing but the happiness of an only son?

Gert. Lady Aubrette, you alarm me! I am thunderstruck! are you indeed in your senses?

Lady Aub. Truly, yes, you will find I have all my wits about me; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Gert. No, no! it is impossible—I will return to Mrs. Woodly immediately; I will openly declare every thing, and, tho' she may be lost to me for ever, yet she must know the truth.

[GERTRUDE *going*, *Lady* AUBRETTE *retaining her.*

Lady Aub. And would you abandon me at this crisis? consider, my dear friend, there is only you that can convince Sir John.

Gert. Oh! how sincerely I wish that I had never come here!

Lady Aub. But tell me candidly, what have you done with Mr. Gainsford? why did you send him away at this precise time?

Gert. I have sent him, madam, to Mrs. Woodly, to tell her from first to last of your invitations here; to declare his intentions to her—to inquire my little history.

Lady Aub. Ho, ho, ho! thou art to be sure a superlative creature, to think of sending a handsome, elegant, accomplished, rich young lover, to consult with his avaricious, cool-thinking, prudent old aunt, on the propriety of marrying a girl, without fortune it may happen to be; and now that I have obtained the old father's consent, what a superfluous ceremony was that! If this be your idea of managing an affair of the heart, it is time I give you a lesson.

Gert. It is true, I am a novice, but pardon me if I have no faith in your instructions.

Lady Aub. Come, come, let me point out to you that you have really committed a very great error in

sending this young man to consult Mrs. Woodly; she is, to be sure, a very excellent creature, but I suspect may have a superabundance of family pride; and she knowing nothing of the father's consent, will so preach to the young man, that, what between sentiments of fictitious honor and sincere attachment to you, I should not be surprised, seeing his ardent temper, if in the transport of passion, he should shoot or drown himself.

Gert. Oh, oh, oh!

[GERTRUDE *faints, and Lady* AUBRETTE *supports her.*

Lady Aub. What have I done? who ever dreamt of attachment like this? I am certain I never felt anything of this kind for Sir John. My angelic friend! look up—fear nothing! all will yet be well.

Gert. [*recovering*] No! I never can be forgiven.

Lady Aub. Come, come! keep up your spirits, you know my manner of expressing myself—I am fond of superlatives.

Gert. And when these are used for probable consequences, they properly make a double impression.

[*A loud knocking and ringing is heard, the ladies tremble, and one involuntarily seizes the arm of the other.*

Both. What can that be?

Lady Aub. Don't faint again, I entreat you.

[*Lady* AUBRETTE *places chairs,* GERTRUDE *sits.*

[*A voice within*]—Where is she? send her to me immediately. [*The ladies tremble.*

Gert. What a rage he is in.

Lady Aub. You will see how I shall perform.

Enter Richard.

Richard. Sir John requests to speak with your ladyship immediately, in the library.

Lady Aub. Oh mighty good! Is any one with him?

Richard. A gentleman in black, my lady, a stranger.

Lady Aub. Say I am coming this moment.

[*Exit* Richard.

Gert. A gentleman in black—now who can that be but the lawyer?

Lady Aub. Or the Diable?

Gert. I tremble to think!

Lady Aub. Lean on my arm; but let me have no tears—no faintings; innocence like ours should be courageous—you will see how I shall perform.

[*Drawing herself up proudly.*

Gert. Be assured this is no time for trifling.

[*Exeunt together,* GERTRUDE *leaning on the arm of Lady* AUBRETTE.

SCENE IV.—*The Library. Sir* JOHN *and a Gentleman in black seated before a table on which are spread several papers.*

Enter Lady AUBRETTE *and* GERTRUDE.

Sir John. [*to the Gentleman*] I will thank you to

retire a few moments, Sir, and if you will wait for me in the drawing-room, we will return to town together: Miss Stanley will oblige me also by retiring, as I must speak to Lady Aubrette in private.

[*Exit Gentleman.*

Gert. Oh Sir John! if I might but speak one word, first——

Sir John. My amiable friend, it must be at another time. [*Exit* GERTRUDE, *weeping.*

Lady Aub. Well, Sir John, what are your commands with me?

Sir John. Commands that will not be very agreeable to you, madam.

Lady Aub. Oh! pardon me, Sir John, anything in which you have any concern must be very agreeable and interesting to Lady Aubrette.

Sir John. Away with all trifling, it is time to be serious. Of young Gainsford I would speak, whom you secretly led here, and led to his destruction!

Lady Aub. Why I don't know how that may be, but I think it is moderate enough for a beauty to kill but one in her time.

Sir John. Ridiculous woman! you have little idea of the business which leads me here.

Lady Aub. Oh! excuse me; my penetration tells me a divorce is in question, and that gentleman in black is one of the amiable fraternity employed on these occasions.

Sir John. Mad woman, you deceive yourself, a divorce is not intended, but a proper keeper.

Lady Aub. Oh the monster! He is a very elegant, handsome, accomplished young man, this Mr. Gainsford——

Sir John. And but for Lady Aubrette might have lived a valuable member of society.

Lady Aub. Ha, ha, excellent! upon my honor.

Sir John. Hear me, madam! you chose to invite to your house Sir Rupert Gainsford's only son; the consequence of which is——

Lady Aub. You are very jealous.

Sir John. Be convinced—I know all the truth —I know that a serious attachment has taken place——

Lady Aub. Between two of the most amiable and interesting persons in the world.

Sir John. To prevent the very possibility of which, Gertrude was sent here——

Lady Aub. That no offence might be given to an avaricious old father and aunt.

Sir John. And your ladyship has obtained consent of the father for Gilbert to marry this lady of immense property.

Lady Aub. The written consent, which all the world can tell you, is fully binding.

Sir John. The unfortunate young man is made acquainted with Gertrude's history—he knows that she is his own sister, and he has not been heard of since he learnt the truth; and it is apprehended, for you know his ardent character, that he has shot or drowned himself.

Lady Aub. [*Appearing horror-struck*] Oh, oh! what do I hear? [*Bursts into tears.*

Sir John. [*Producing a newspaper*] See, look here! he is every where advertised—an immense reward is offered for him, dead or alive—the Bow-street officers are in search of him—inquiries went

abroad from the very moment he left the house, and I am come here to know if your ladyship can give any information to his afflicted relations.

Lady Aub. Oh, Sir John! pity me, pardon me.

Sir John. I pardon!—what will that avail? the father—the whole family are arrived, and though they are not yet informed that Gilbert is missing, you must expect the consequence!

Lady Aub. Oh! horror! horror! hide me from myself—believe me, Sir John, my repentance is sincere.

Sir John. Unfortunate woman—what reparation will that make the injured family? Is your crime less than murder?

Lady Aub. Oh, Sir John! I give myself up to justice—I ask no mercy!

Sir John. Is your ladyship's passion for adventures fully satisfied? have you sufficiently provoked your husband? Can one sin, or even err, in the slightest degree, with impunity? Will your reputation escape this outrage?

Lady Aub. Oh, I cannot survive this shock!

Sir John. You must return with me to town—Miss Stanley must also go and remain under Mrs. Woodly's care—Sir Rupert Gainsford must see you—Gertrude must not be named, she will keep exclusively to her own apartment—the gentleman you have just seen will attend us.

Lady Aub. Oh, save me! hide me from——

Sir John. Compose yourself—I will not abandon you at this awful crisis; but, before I set off, I must inquire if there be any tidings of the young

man in this neighbourhood—if the corpse be found —perhaps he may have sought his death in this river at the foot of your garden, within sight of the cause of his destruction.

Lady Aub. I feel I am dying——

Sir John. Be calm—we must exert ourselves to the utmost. [*Exit Sir* JOHN.

Lady Aub. Oh, my unfortunate friend! oh, Gertrude! what will become of you when you hear this story? What have I done? My blood freezes in my veins. If he is dead, indeed, may swift justice overtake me.

[*She falls fainting on a sofa, and the curtain drops.*

SCENE V.—*An Apartment at an Hotel.*

Enter FIELDING *and a Servant, other Servants bring in different parcels; amongst other articles a pair of pistols, which are placed on a table. Exit all but* FIELDING, *and* Tom, *his Servant.*

Field. Thank kind fate, I am at length arrived in this glorious capital. Merciful providence, thou who hast conducted me safe through so many dangers, grant that I may find the object of my wishes alive, in health, and oh, above all things, virtuous!

Tom. I hope, Sir, we have not to travel any farther to-night.

Field. No, no! we must take some hours repose —our travels are very nearly ended, friend.

Tom. Oh, kind fate be praised! it is a long lane, they say, which never has a turning, and I began a few days ago to think much the same of our journey.

Field. I admit, that you do not complain without reason—but see now, order my usual evening's refreshment, and take care of yourself. [*Exit* Tom.] How my heart beats! the nearer I approach, the stronger grows my agitation—time that represses the ardour of the ruder passions, to pure affection gives increase of force. Oh, heaven! thou who allottest to all men in this vale their portion of calamity, let not this grief, which most I dread, fall to my lot! already I have paid some heavy forfeits in probation's school—sometimes I fancied that those letters—oh, if I must experience disappointment at this pass, what is to me this world, my wealth, my honors, and my life?

Enter Tom.

Tom. May it please your honor, the old priest, the doctor, the woman, and all the company, is just arrived—I have ordered them other rooms, as I thought you would not like to be disturbed here.

Field. It is well; see that they have every comfort and attendance; I must, however, speak to them myself before I take my rest; there is but one step more, and all is happiness, or all despair!

[*Exit* FIELDING.

Tom. Oh dear me, what a novelty it will be to have a whole night's rest! my bones do so ache, I

am afraid they are all out of joint; rattle, rattle, day after day, night after night; I wish I could find out what my master has upon his mind, for something he must have; he has brought with him many rich bags, which I hope were all had honestly, but la! money is such a temptation; and then, what can be the meaning of this crowd of gentry that we have brought with us? parson, parish clerk, sexton, and one or two old nurses; well, I dare say there is some woman in the case; poor fellow, he has been crost in his youthful days; lucky it is for me, that never a one of these women ever set eyes upon me, for so sure as ever they do, there is an end of you; but now I suppose my supper must be ready and my master's, and we may all go to bed and dream quietly for the first time this year. [*Exit* Tom.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same Apartment in the Hotel which* FIELDING *had entered; the table with the pistols lying upon it; different parcels, &c.*

Enter GILBERT, *his dress disordered; he has a letter in his hand which he puts on the table; perceiving the pistols, he starts back astonished.*

Gil. Ha, where am I? Do my eyes deceive me? What, do ye tempt me?—but no, no, no! Should he who has never injured mortal man—never disgraced himself in any way—should he allow the caprice of fortune to make a coward of him? oh, Thou Omnipotent! support me in the trial thou hast given. But could you, my father, know at this moment what a dagger you have planted in your son's breast, surely you could not have a heart, and live and reflect on your crime.

[*He takes up one of the pistols, and coming to the front of the stage examines it. In the mean time* FIELDING *enters unperceived by him.*

Field. Who can this be? some one who has mistaken his room, perhaps. [FIELDING, *seeing a letter on the table, looks at the direction, and, in great surprise, reads it, and appears more astonished.*] It is open, it is for me to take to her!

Gil. It feels heavy! it is already loaded! Oh, Gertrude! the very recollection of you, would be sufficient to check every thought that hovered on an act of madness! Who pretends to respect your happiness, and thus prepare for you a long life of affliction? [FIELDING *has approached, and attentively listens.*] I have sent her a last farewell!—have told her—what have I told her? Oh had it been some deadly foe that brought this evil on me, could I resist the temptation? perhaps my hand had struck a murderous blow.

[*He raises his hand as if in the act of firing at something before him*—FIELDING *grasps his arm—in the mean time the pistol discharges, and he starts looking in wild amazement at* FIELDING.

Field. Oh, speak! tell me I conjure you—is it indeed my child that causes your distress?—my long lost child, my Gertrude! is she well — is she happy?

Gil. Who dares to mock at my calamity? Who dares to call her any thing but——

Field. Fielding's daughter, who now addresses you, as certain it is, as that I see Sir Rupert Gainsford's son—be calm, be satisfied, you have been deceived.

Gil. Deceived! Impossible! Ho, ho, ho!

Field. Merciful Providence! that broughtest me at this very moment here to save him from destruction—to save, I trust, my only child—how can I prove my gratitude?

Gil. Man! can you tamper with a grief like mine? [*Looking at him very earnestly.*

Field. Yes, look at me, would you could look into my very inmost soul! but try if you can discover some lineament—some little time-worn, but persuasive trait, that may plead better for me than my words—[*throwing off his cap and turning to* GILBERT] does she not resemble me?

Gil. It may be, oh, I fear! yes, yes, it must be! [*Falls on his shoulder.*

Field. Now tell me that no dark intelligence has reached her; [*holding up the letter*] this letter——

Gil. Is in your hands; she has not seen it.

Field. For all is false! Mrs. Woodly has deceived you, because she is deceived herself.

Gil. Swear you can prove it!

Field. As I hope for mercy at the throne of Grace!

Gil. And be assured! for in this agonizing state, I feel that heaven and earth alike are flying from me! And could I spare him that could now betray me?

Field. Be satisfied; for if I could not prove the sacred truth, my grief were even deeper than your own!

Gil. And yet she made the deadly tale so plain, 'twould seem that nothing mortal could confound the statement.

Field. Let us be calm! my heart, like yours, is torn. Oh, have I travelled so far, and so fast, to be just within one moment of perdition?—Is every step on the common road of life so exactly measured?—

Awful contemplation! hair breadth escape! Is my child safe? Is she well, indeed?

Gil. And happy; for she knows not my distress.

Field. Oh! all this is wonderful; what but an all-directing hand could have preserved us? And were you, young man, on the point of condemning yourself eternally? what might have been the consequence, had you been left another hour? and was it, too, at the very time that the Almighty was stretching forth his hand to shower his blessings on you? spite of those specious arguments I heard, I trembled for you. Oh! let this be an everlasting lesson to you—to every one whom despair has seized—let him ask himself, if, at the very moment whilst he is madly contemplating self-destruction, if the hand of Providence may not just then be raised to save him in the storm!

Gil. Oh! my more than father! if I can but be assured of your regard, there is no more adversity for me in this world!

Field. Are you indeed corrected?

Gil. And for ever!

Field. We will proceed to business, then; take this disguise, [*throwing a cloak over him*] you must attend me to Mrs. Woodly's; in proving the facts to her, I shall establish your conviction; but do not betray yourself till she is satisfied.

Gil. I promise!

Field. First, however, I must see my child for a moment, and be satisfied that she is well—what a moment for a father! dare you accompany me?

Gil. Ah, do not doubt me——

Enter Tom.

Tom. Please you, Sir, the coach is at the door, and I met at the house an Irishman, who told me as how that the young lady I inquired about was just returned from the country, that the old lady was out, but expected in every hour.

Field. That is fortunate.

Tom. And, Sir, before this Irishman would answer me any one question, I was always obliged to answer what he asked first, or I should not have brought back any news for you, Sir.

Field. You have done well; now take care of every thing here till I return: we will go.

Gil. So fate preserve us.

[*Exeunt together* FIELDING *and* GILBERT.

Tom. So there goes my love and perplexity, with another stranger, too, and now must I go on like a dutiful servant with my story, and if my master would not stay to hear the truth, it cannot be said that I have not spoken it;—I am afraid then, Sir, that I have made a very great blunder with this here Irishman,—[*continuing as if addressing his master, and turning his head occasionally that way*]—but I hope, Sir, this confession will gain my pardon. This fellow contrived to worm out of me, I cannot tell how, all that I had got out of the gentry that we have brought with us from the west of England, Sir; and so, Sir, don't be surprised if you hear the whole of your own story as soon as you make your

appearance; how many bags of gold you have brought with you, how many fine things of all sorts, in short, Sir, don't be surprised at any thing—and now, Sir, having settled my conscience on this point, I'll go look about for your keys, or, mayhap, when we have got some miles farther, I shall hear less of my love, and more of perplexity. First, I'll turn the key of this here door, while I goes see if all be safe at that there; for they say there's a rogue at every corner in this same Lunnon.

[*Locks a door, and goes into another room.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Mrs.* WOODLY'S *house.*

Enter Patrick.

Pat. They talk of a Jew's eye, but sure it will now be an Irishman's eye that will be all the go; for if that be not our young master's buckles upon that gentleman's feet, Patrick O'Laughligan never saw the Land of Saints. £500 reward for him; ah, indeed, if the John Bulls allow me to catch it, I shall drink long life to your honors for ever [*approaching and bowing to the audience*]. £500! what an elegant estate that will buy me in the Green Isle, and, gentlemen, as we fly every day faster and faster in our steam-carriages, I hope before I have cultivated my lands two years, to be able to send you the most beautiful potatoes all hot to market! Exquisite Mrs. Roper, if you did but know of this blessed windfall! how many a pretty thing

would you have to say to Master Patrick. Oh elegant buckles! it was not for nothing that I took so much pains with you, and never allowed any one to touch them but myself; so true it is that a good turn is never lost—soon as ever I opened the door, I espied them, and all muffled as he was, I thought I caught his eye; but the diamond buckles shall be my guide, for sure we all know that never a thief in Christendom would come to the house he had robbed with the goods on his back!

[*On hearing Mrs.* Roper, *he retreats a little.*

Enter Mrs. Roper.

Mrs. Roper. I have now spent three, four, five, six pounds, after this £500, and no tidings of him. It would try the patience of a saint to have fortune so thrown before one, to be within one inch of catching, and yet, perhaps, after all, lose it. But what can all this crowd of people be come here about if not after him? most likely it is a party from the Humane Society, come to ask pay for their trouble, at least, if they have not brought any tidings about him; or why not to say where the body is now lying? Have I, then, been travelling far north, whilst the prize is at my elbow? I will hasten into the Steward's room and sift the attendants, and I will begin the ceremony with a little of my cherry brandy; if that will not do, I despair for ever! [*Exit, hastily, Mrs.* Roper.

Patrick *advancing.*

Pat. Very wisely said, indeed, Mrs. Roper!

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"to be within one inch of catching, and yet lose the game after all;" that remark is worth a tin-penny piece, and will put me instantly on the alert. Yes, yes, whilst you go and sift the good people below stairs, I will go to her honor above, and honestly and openly win the prize! [*Exit* Patrick.

Enter Mrs. WOODLY, *Servant following.*

Mrs. Wood. Two strangers! whom you never recollect seeing here before, you say?

Servant. Never, madam.

Mrs. Wood. Say I will attend them immediately. [*Exit Servant.*] Oh! these persons must bring me some fatal intelligence; I seek, but tremble to hear the truth; good intelligence it cannot be! alas! how can I longer conceal from my brother the cause of the grief that is destroying me? how shall I be able longer to account for his son's absence? What can all this crowd of persons mean, attending those who ask for me? but I must see them, tho' the word be death! [*Exit Mrs.* WOODLY.

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Mrs.* WOODLY'S *House. A Servant shewing in* FIELDING *and* GILBERT.

Servant. Mrs. Woodly will attend you in this room, in a few minutes, gentlemen. [*Exit Servant.*

Gil. Have I, then, performed my promise well?

Field. To admiration! happy hour! angelic sweetness! it is Maria's self restored to me—one little trial to your patience more, be calm, whatever be the event! I hear Mrs. Woodly——

Enter Mrs. WOODLY.

[*They bow.*

Field. I have the honor to address Mrs. Woodly?—The important business which has led me here——

Mrs. Wood. Speak, Sir, without farther preface, I entreat you.

Field. Do not be alarmed, madam, I have nothing to communicate of an unfortunate nature.

Mrs. Wood. Is he, then, living? His father, his family, are arrived, but as yet they know nothing.

Gil. [*Apart.*] That is fortunate.

Field. Be satisfied, madam, you will soon have intelligence of the most agreeable nature.

Enter Patrick, *looking cautiously about.*

Mrs. Wood. I will be assured, then——

Pat. Save me, St. Patrick, I am first; I have you, madam Roper: [*he approaches Mrs.* WOODLY] one word in your honor's ear.

Mrs. Wood. Do not you see, Patrick, I am engaged?

Pat. It is on that account, my lady, I am come so to the pint at once; [*lowering his voice and approaching nearer*] your honor is £500 in my debt, I have found out young master.

Mrs. Wood. And alive? [*Starts.*

[FIELDING *and* GILBERT *converse.*

Pat. As ever he was in his life, your honor!

was it not right, your honor, to tell you without delay?

Mrs. Wood. Very right, indeed! I am most thankful.

Pat. And sure, as your honor promised £500 for him dead, you will split the difference, and make golden guineas, now that he is alive?

Mrs. Wood. Oh, most willingly! and to a faithful servant, only let me be assured——

Pat. That be he! but mum! [*pointing to* GILBERT] sure, your honor, he'll spake presently!

Mrs. Wood. Retire! and depend upon my honor. [*Exit* Patrick.] What can this mean?

FIELDING *and* GILBERT *approach.*

Mrs. Wood. I sincerely entreat your pardon, Sir, for this interruption; you were going to speak of——

Field. Gertrude.

Mrs. Wood. How!

Field. The facts I have to tell, are strange; to gain your credit I must relate the little story of my life.

Mrs. Wood. Proceed, Sir, I entreat you.

Field. It was my fate to marry early, madam; a younger son of rank, with little fortune or preferment, ardent and enthusiastic, I never doubted that success would follow every aspiring effort, that I should quickly raise above capricious fortune the woman I adored; but disappointment every where pursued me; and oh! how doubly galling is the

smart in that same age when hope will flatter most; when a beloved object, too, must share the evil, how doubly keen is every wound of fate!

Mrs. Wood. I sincerely sympathize in your concern, Sir, but——

Field. A better fortune seemed to be destined for us in a foreign clime; we only waited for the birth of Gertrude to quit the kingdom; oh, wretched hour for me! heart-rending stroke! the mother of my child survived the event but three short weeks!

Mrs. Wood. Alas, indeed! but then——

Field. Ah! then I placed my infant with a poor female who had just lost her child, and when I saw she fostered mine with care, I hastened to depart, resolved to seek for fortune for my daughter's sake.

Mrs. Wood. Still I imagine some mistake—your child might be named Gertrude. The nurse, who was she?

Field. The story told abroad, she had lost her husband shortly after her marriage. The decent sorrow in her looks expressed, and her retired behaviour seemed to confirm, a tale which in itself was not remarkable; pardon me now, if the necessity for speaking strictest truth, obliges me to state unpleasing facts,—she came from the west of England, madam.

Mrs. Wood. Ha, indeed!

Field. Alike to escape reproach herself, and screen from public censure Sir Rupert Gainsford—

Mrs. Wood. Proceed, Sir; I entreat you, in all haste proceed! [*In an agitated manner.*

Gil. [*Apart*] Merciful providenee!

Field. This woman, it appears, received from you a quarterly allowance; she, fearing that your bounty might diminish, were you informed that she had lost her child, neglected to apprize you.

Mrs. Wood. Oh, welcome news! oh, blest discovery! oh, unexpected hour!

Field. Appointing as I thought a worthy agent, I left my country: but I was most deceived in him I trusted; from time to time remitting money, the villain frequently contrived to give me different assurances as from my daughter's self; he heard of my approach, and fled inquiring justice:—to return, the infant grew, and you most unexpectedly demanded her; the nurse, perplexed, and hearing nothing from me, resolved, after some self-debate, to keep the secret, and happy to resign the child to one so truly worthy, she brought her to this house, and, as she says, you asked no questions, and she told no falsehood.

Mrs. Wood. 'Tis true as wonderful! had your child any mark by which you could farther recognize her, if it were not already sufficiently proved?

Field. She was born with a deep brown circle on her left arm.

Mrs. Wood. Farther proofs are not necessary, witnesses are superfluous.

Field. Excuse me, madam, you must examine them all, I trust you will, if only to oblige me—I have brought the nurse herself—the village doctor, too, is here, in whose arms your real niece expired three weeks before my child was born; and next,

the reverend vicar who registered the birth of Gertrude; and other witnesses I have assembled.

Mrs. Wood. Why you have acted as one accustomed to such suits!

Field. Ah, madam, what sits so near the heart, is always nicely measured by the head.

Mrs. Wood. To whom, Sir, may I now inquire, must I resign this precious charge?

Gil. To me! to me! I have heard the sacred truth, she is mine for ever!

[*Throwing off his cloak.*

Mrs. Wood. Was ever happiness like this?

[*Falls on his shoulder embracing him.*

Gil. You know not how much we owe, to our benefactor here; blessed meeting!

Mrs. Wood. I am not yet favoured with his name.

Field. 'Tis Edward Fielding, madam.

Mrs. Wood. And, if I mistake not, you married——

Field. Maria Wentworth.

Mrs. Wood. Oh, strange coincidence! blessed discovery! then in my bosom I have lodged your child, my early friend Maria!

Field. Ha, indeed! I have often heard her regret the interruption of your correspondence—now let us proceed to the witnesses.

[*Exeunt Mrs.* WOODLY, FIELDING, *and* GILBERT.

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in Mrs.* WOODLY'S *house.*

Enter Patrick.

Pat. Her honor has passed her word, and will never be after drawing back; and though it be true that she would have heard the good news half an hour after I brought it; sure we all know what half a second is, when life or death is in question: well, by this time madam Roper's company from the Humane Society have made an elegant dinner, and the cream of the jest, the bottle of cherry brandy is half emptied; some news, I think, must be forthcoming, ah, here she is.

Enter Mrs. Roper, *a bottle in her hand, holding it up.*

Mrs. Roper. Scarce three glasses left, never in my life did I meet with such a set of stupid animals; after wasting my bottle, all the tidings they pretend to have, is about a young lady. Can he have changed his dress? I never thought of that.

Patrick *coming forward.*

Pat. Mrs. Roper, I was just thinking it would be a shocking thing if this money were to go out of the family. Can you tell me if the Serpentine has been dragged yet, or whether the body be found, dead or alive?

Mrs. Roper. Stupid fool! if thou hadst had a

grain of common sense, thou would'st have taken thy long-hooked shillaly, and have dragged him out thyself.

Pat. Ah! but thinks I, what is the use of my troubling myself to go so far, when, perhaps, the prize is at my elbow; and, as all this company must be come about young master, I have made up my mind, whilst my half-witted fellow-servants are running after tag-rag and bob-tail, in the steward's room, cracking, perhaps, a bottle of their mistress's best, by way of sifting out the poor people's honesty, I have made up my mind, I say, like a true gentleman, like a true-born Irishman, with my new wig to proceed to the fountain head, to the two gentlemen in the drawing-room, who came with the company, and ask them in an open honest manner, of they are after bringing any news of young master. There is nothing like going to the fountain head, Mrs. Roper.

Mrs. Roper. Dip thy own stupid head into the fountain, and I'll dip this into the fire.

[*Mrs.* Roper *snatches off the wig, and exit hastily.* Patrick *very composedly takes a kerchief from his pocket, and puts it on his head.*

Pat. Ha, ha, ha! madam Roper, what would thy vengeance be if thou wert to know all the luck that has showered on my pate this morning? But merit and virtue will have their reward in this world, and so they will in the next, says St. Patrick. And now must I go after my other wig, that I may not have to shew my face like Johnny Gilpin's.

Enter, hastily, Sir RUPERT GAINSFORD, LUCY, ARTHUR, *Dr.* LINTON.

Sir Rupert. Where is he?

[*Sir* RUPERT *runs up to Patrick without waiting to look at him, and throwing his arms round him, exclaims*——

Sir Rupert. Oh thou lucky boy!

Pat. Ah! lucky, indeed, your honor, though I have lost my wig this morning.

[*Sir* RUPERT *starting back—the whole company laughing.*

Sir Rupert. Why, what mistake is this? they told me my son was here.

Pat. Never mind, your honor, it is all very right, when fortune smiles upon us, it becomes quite asy for the great to caress us—sure, your honor, I expect to be very often hugged in this way now.

Sir Rupert. But where is he? lead me to him, let me see him; I have received this note saying he would be here, the lady—all friends——

Pat. This way if you please, Sir, I believe they are in the next room; your honor will excuse my head, I was just going after my old wig; madam Roper, the housekeeper here, having stolen my new one.

Sir Rupert. Never mind, friend, we will find you another.

[*Exit* Patrick, *Sir* RUPERT *and others following.*

SCENE V.—*The Library. Mrs.* WOODLY, FIELDING, GILBERT.

Mrs. Wood. I trust you will detain your company for a few days, I would have them share in our rejoicings.

Sir Rup. (*entering*) Where is he? Where is my son Gilbert?

[*Sir* RUPERT *falls on* GILBERT'S *neck.*

Gil. Dear Sir, this unlooked for happiness, the distance so great——

Enter LUCY.

Sweet sister, so much felicity in one day!

[*Embracing* LUCY.

Enter Dr. LINTON *and* ARTHUR, GERTRUDE, *Lady* AUBRETTE, *and Sir* JOHN.

Gert. [*To Mrs.* WOODLY] My dear, dear benefactress!

Mrs. Wood. Do I see you again? and happy as my heart could wish?

Gert. My father! how long have these few moments appeared to me!

Field. My child, what do I owe to Mrs. Woodly's care!

Gert. If to devote my life to you and Mrs. Woodly——

Field. And another claimant here, whose merits I support.

[FIELDING *joins the hands of* GILBERT *and* GERTRUDE.

Gil. Dear Gertrude, it were vain to seek for words to express our thanks to our friends, our happiness, our gratitude.

Gert. Our happiness will be their best reward.

Gil. Lucy, this day the happiest of my life.

[*Joins the hands of* LUCY *and* GERTRUDE.

Lucy. Sweet sister, I do rejoice, and thank my brother most sincerely for thus enriching me; [*embracing*] how charming it is to have a sister!

Gert. How fully blest it makes me——

[GILBERT *looking significantly at Lady* AUBRETTE.

Gil. My father, you have heard of her perfections? [GILBERT *presenting her to Sir* RUPERT.

Sir Rupert. I am sure she is an angel! [*Sir* RUPERT *embraces* GERTRUDE] the portrait was most faithful.

Sir John. Spare my wife's blushes, [*to* GILBERT] she is quite reformed!

Lady Aub. Oh! would we were all so, and as easily.

Enter, hastily, ROLLAND.

Roll. Where is my charmer? [*running up to* LUCY] Do I at last behold her?

Sir Rupert. S'death, Sir, what do you mean?

Roll. In few words, that I have posted after you on the wings of impatience, fully determined to decamp with this lady, and not being able to overtake you on the road here, I have found you out; the coach is at the door—four fleet horses—and now, who shall dare to dispute with me?

Sir Rupert. Madman, be gone, or I shall instantly send for Bow Street officers.

Roll. I can save you that trouble; they are, great and small, in previous requisition; I have sent them after some highwaymen who stopped me on the road, and prevented my overtaking you.

[*Sir* RUPERT *rings.*

Enter a Servant.

Sir Rupert. Turn this madman out!

[*Mrs.* WOODLY *rings.*

Enter Patrick.

Mrs. Wood. Turn this madman out, and give him to the police!

Roll. No, turn that madman out, he has long been a barrier to my happiness—at the peril of your lives, gentlemen!

[*Both Servants approach him, and he presents a pistol to each in a menacing manner, on which they start back.*

Dr. L. Let me persuade you to retire.

Gil. Let me advise you, Rolland.

[*Points at the Doctor—Sir* RUPERT *rings again.*

Enter more Servants.

Sir Rupert. Instantly dispatch some one to Bow-street for officers.

Mrs. Wood, Let there be no delay.

[*Exit one of the Servants.*

Sir John. Why don't you boldly turn him out, now there are half a dozen of you, for if the Officers are not to be found——

Sir Rupert. We may have this annoyance the whole day: what are you afraid of?

[*The Servants approach and struggle with him, he fires over the head of one, and they all run off scared, calling out*——

Servants. Oh! I am shot! I am shot! I am a dead man!

Pat. Why don't you boldly stand fire, gentlemen, like a true Irishman?

[Patrick *runs after the others as fast as possible.*

Roll. Now nothing remains but a *coup de main,* come along wife.

[ROLLAND *attempts to move off with* LUCY, *taking her arm—she disengages herself.*

Arthur. S'death, Sir, I challenge you to answer this.

Lucy. Be assured, Sir, I have been silent so long, only from the positive conviction that you are mad indeed.

Field. It appears to me, Sir Rupert, that this contest might be very quietly ended—dispose of the lady to one of the candidates.

Roll. You are a reasonable man—that is all I require—only let there be no delay; I abominate all shilly-shally.

Lady Aub. Now I like him for that, Sir John.

Roll. If I had not met with bad horses on the road, Sir Rupert should have surrendered long ago. I have known him these thirty years, I know we may all grow grey in waiting for his consent, I will say more, I know that if I were the King's son, he would not give it—therefore what can a sincere lover do in such a case. [*Sir* RUPERT *walks about disturbedly.*

Gil. Dear sister, make your choice.

Gert. Sir Rupert cannot on this happy day——

Roll. Neglect to make you happy—tell him how long in secret you have adored me.

Arthur. Oh! speak now, and free me from this cruel suspense.

Roll. Silence, all the world over gives consent; come, dearest spouse.

[ARTHUR *places himself at the door as if to guard it.*

Lucy. Dear papa, your choice must be mine.

Sir Rupert. Take her, she is yours by right of constancy. [*Sir* RUPERT *gives* LUCY *to* ARTHUR.

Arthur. How shall I express my gratitude!

Lucy. My dear father, you confirm our happiness.

Roll. S'death and confusion, am I thus foiled? Here's a deep coquette! Oh false sex! perfidious woman! Have I travelled so far and so fast after you, to be betrayed at the end.

Dr. L. Keep your temper!

Sir John. No occasion now, I believe, for any official member, save and excepting the old priest which our noble friend Fielding has brought with him from the west of England.

Field. You are right, Sir John; and, with Sir Rupert's permission, we will immediately employ him.

Sir Rupert. Oh, by all means, we will spare Mr. Madcap here any farther flights after us.

[ROLLAND *sings.*

I lov'd a maid, she me betray'd,
Good care I'll take so don't another——

Sir John. Then we shall have three weddings on this day.

Lady Aub. How, Sir John, three?

Sir John. Why, yes; a new wife I have gained in thee!

And now 'bove all things let me recommend
To each whom it concerns, or foe, or friend;
To keep your temper in this world of strife!
Be calm to rule, be calm to improve a wife.

Gil. Let him rejoice who never rashly ties
The marriage knot;—

Sir Rupert. —There my son's merit lies.

Roll.

Let him rejoice, who makes each folly prove,
A delegate of friendship or of love!
Who, acting wildly, has a sober end,
Who plays the fool mad folly to amend,
Whose final interest in the present game
Your smile to win—to consummate his fame.

[*To the audience.*

The curtain falls.

FINIS.

THE FATE OF

IVAN.

A Tragedy, in Five Acts.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT PANIM, *Prime Minister.*
The Hetman RAZUMOFFSKY.
ORLOFF, *favourite of* Catharine.
PASSICK.
GLEBOFF.
ODART.
The ARCHBISHOP of NOVGOROD.
ISMAEL.

Adherents to CATHARINE *at the time of the revolution which placed her upon the throne.*

PAUL PETROVITCH, Catharine's *son.*
Guards, Soldiers, &c.

The CZAR.
GENERAL MUNICH.
BARON KORF.
BARON STERNBERG.
VOLKOFF.
PRINCE IVAN.
COUNT LEOF.

Adherents of the Czar.

BEREDNIKOFF.
Vlassief and Ischekin, *Guards to* Ivan.
LIEUTENANT MIROVITCH.

CATHARINE, *Empress of the Russians.*
PRINCESS DASHKOFF, *her friend.*
COUNTESS VORONTZOFF, *favourite of the* Czar.
CATHARINE IVANOFNA, *attendant and confidante of the* Empress.
Pages, &c.

*** *In the general parts of this piece, close regard is paid to historical facts, and the lines in inverted commas are the literal speeches of the persons at the time of action.*

THE FATE OF IVAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The front of the Imperial Palace of Peterhoff.*

Enter CATHARINE IVANOFNA *one way, meeting* ORLOFF *from the opposite side.*

Kate. HA, Orloff! by thy good stars, thou art the very person of whom I'm sent in quest.

Orloff. And by anticipation here I come.

Kate. Aye, indeed?

Orloff. Most true; but look out there, shrewd nymph! can thy lynx eye, dost think, discover what those courtiers have in plot? [*Pointing out.*

Kate. Had'st thou but shewn me eyes instead of heels—a formidable tribe at least: eagles in multitudes are seldom found; when the thing happens, e'en wise men think it ominous; so far I see, and farther still presage, thou wilt be wanted for some mighty deeds; thy valour Catharine knows; mischief is on the wing!

Orloff. Where women are, there ne'er is lack of that.

Kate. Look well, then, to thyself! the favourite of a royal fair needs more than mortal caution to

preserve him, and every ray in the bright halo round him is but a pointed dart that threats at every turn; wise men ne'er seek the danger; for thee, I do sincerely give thee credit, thou didst not court it; our mistress honors every sort of merit, and none so prompt as she to mark its growth, so——

Orloff. Hist! prithee, hist! and be upon thy wont discretion; this way those giants in the sphere of power are moving, and should they see us, they'll set their heads to work, nor rest till they determine the cause of converse 'twixt us.

Kate. To prevent which I'll cover my retreat, so thou'lt perceive I'm not a general merely for the hour of conquest; in half an hour do thou pursue my path.

Orloff. I will not fail thee, for depend upon't—

Kate. He is but half a lover who does not time outstrip in his appointment.

Orloff. I understand, and scarcely can determine which is the fittest for plodding through this life, or Catharine Empress, or subject Kate, or which, in self-esteem, is most a Queen!

Kate. I'll aid thy judgment as I see the cause; she who must him and him admire, may wear a crown, but is withal a slave; and she may reign, indeed, if all around her, like myself, be faithful, but there's no if or but with one like me; swayed by no passion, no caprice directed, myself I govern, all about me rule; so thereof think, and let thy honest thought decide, which, in effect and truth, is most a queen! [*Exit* KATE.

Orloff. To have chosen thee for confidante in

Cupid's train, and me for General in the field of Mars, doth in thy mistress give all title to supremacy, and thy self-love and mine should be content — but let me save myself the hearing of those fellows, who would pretend to have no other idol than their country, no music dearer than the clang of arms, the drum's proud rattle, and the dancing fife—yet place these busy praters in the field, hush'd is their din, their pleasure and their prowess vanish; present the danger, and their virtue flies, 'tis chaff before the wind! Nature has made me plain indeed in phrase, denied me power to parley with the statesman, or to advance my cause by any art of soft persuasion, yet, as they say, she has so moulded me, that where I am but seen, I cannot fail to please; how that may be I know not—care not—thankful I am, she has bestowed a heart that never shrinks at any form of danger, that if there be a peril to be sought, will, with all ardour, all impatience, seek in the thickest of't the foremost place.

[*Exit* ORLOFF.

SCENE II. — *An Apartment in the Palace of Peterhoff* — CATHARINE, *and Princess* DASHKOFF—*a table, on which are spread papers.*

Enter KATE.

Kate. Your Majesty will be obeyed most speedily, I have this moment seen the person you require.

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Cath. 'Tis well, my friend, I have no further orders at this moment. [*Exit* KATE.

Dash. Gone, you say, and no one whither knows?

Cath. Not so, in truth, I am informed of all; doubtless, Vorontzoff has accompanied him.

Dash. Had I but seen her, she should have confessed.

Cath. Poor soul! she does not then resemble Princess Dashkoff.

Dash. Nature, who loves variety, ne'er formed two beings so exactly opposite.

Cath. Now mark my thought—Peter, all honest as he seems, can with the most profound intriguer turn and wind, and give by his deeds the lie to his assertions; know, then, this day the Czar is gone to Schusselberg—hence, hence, the secresy.

Dash. But for what purpose is he gone?

Cath. One motive only can there be for such proceeding, and that the blackest a Herod could devise; Paul Petrovitch, the life-blood of my heart—our only son—him, even him, he means to exclude the throne—me to imprison in the very cell that now holds Ivan—the next step—but need I mention Vorontzoff?

Dash. Ah, indeed!

Cath. Such is the present plot, e'en ripe for execution—think, then, what speedy measures must be ours to arrest the evil; how prompt must I be to design—how full of danger must each purpose be? and last, how unsuccessful may each project prove?

Dash. I cannot think.

Cath. Hast thou never heard the supposition of a plan like this?

Dash. No, no, I thought that she like you would be excluded, that Peter was to espouse a certain Princess.

Cath. Ah! that was but the rumour of a day, which rose in consequence of some slight umbrage Vorontzoff had given the Czar; soon was the offence forgotten, and present death the sickly fancy found. Again that Princess has been long betrothed to one she dearly loves.

Dash. Shall she, shall Vorontzoff be one day seated on the Imperial throne of Russia? Shall she preside o'er this vast empire, and when the fate of millions is in question, shall it be her voice that shall balance in the question?

Cath. [*apart*] I like this indignation.

Dash. Ah! then what dread perversion in the land shall be, for when the women once become depraved, then may we bid adieu to virtue in the men: already fallen is that state, where our sex violate their marriage vows, and blooming virgins openly transgress the laws of nice discretion. Immortal Peter! shall thy beloved country, for which thou did'st so much, be governed thus? Am I the sister of this woman, too?

Cath. Good Dashkoff, tell me, what would thy noble soul in such a case?

Dash. Whatever might become the mother of the emperor, that would I instantly resolve to do.

Cath. To be the mother of the emperor is the grand summit of my soul's ambition—our first step

now must be to prove our friends, next see who will become our partizans; Panin, I know, is ours; tho' the first politician in our empire, Peter has never deigned once to consult him; tho' the politest scholar Russia boasts, no deference has been paid to his opinion; 'tis true, that he is biassed to his systems, but yet——

Dash. A perfect diamond to the crown.

Cath. The Hetman Razumoffsky, boldly avows himself our friend, and he has power which lends our cause no common force. Gleboff we must dispose, and use him cautiously—who has betrayed one master can deceive another.

[CATHARINE *writes in a book.*

Dash. There is one Orloff, in the Guards, most noted for his bravery, no danger can affright him, no peril check him in pursuit of glory.

Cath. He is a soldier for our cause, I have enrolled him. The Frenchman, Odart, who never speaks without convincing metaphor, nor ever turns to do the simplest thing, but by some artful means, he is most fitted for intrigue, and being poor enough, will condescend to any work for gain. Passick, rude and ferocious as the untamed bear, for every office of sedition might be hired.

Dash. The Prince Volkonsky inherits from his kinsman, Bestuchoff, fierce hatred 'gainst the Czar.

Cath. Hate such as his at nothing stops to satiate its vengeance—I set him down.

[*Marks in her book.*

Dash. The Archbishop of Novgorod, tho' late in exile, he retains some powerful influence.

Cath Aye, on the circumstance of that same exile I build my hopes of him. You know for what offence the Czar had banished him, you have heard how raved the prelate when condemned; scarce three months had he been proscribed, when the relenting Peter from captivity recalled him, and now that he has proved the monarch's clemency so speedily on the keen-felt severity, 'tis more like human nature, and the Bishop, to feel the sting of deep resentment 'gainst the offence, rather than aught of gratitude for mercy born of rigour.

Dash. We have him, ours! I will return immediately to Petersburgh, where all is now in train to favour Catharine, where every one looks expectation of some great commotion, where many valiant regiments await my word, to know which way to turn.

Cath. 'Tis true, that many of these men are men, in fact, on whom I'd not rely for more than passing services; incapable of nice fidelity; fit they may be to serve an hour's necessity, and 'tis for that we want them.

Dash. Your Majesty must haste to plan the means of your escape; if you reach Petersburgh before the Czar returns, the troops will rise and instantly proclaim you!

Cath. These last three days, I have devised, reflected, and concluded, and now I only wait the coming of the minister and others I have named, to fix the moment, and speedily they will be here.

Dash. I'll lose no time, but instantly return to meet them. [*Exit* DASHKOFF.

Cath. My foes are feathers,—yet these in multitudes weigh mightily; let me not forget fools can use weapons, the weak will find supporters; happy the monarch who possesses courage, and who resolves to persevere on every intricate occasion.

[*Exit* CATHARINE.

SCENE III.—*The outside of the Castle of Schusselberg. Soldiers on guard: amongst them Lieutenant* MIROVITCH.

Mirov. Some strangers, I perceive, have entered the town.

1*st Sol.* Indeed! what can lead strangers here?

2*nd Sol.* This being a strange place, thick head!

1*st Sol.* Can it be to see the prisoner, Lieutenant?

Mirov. 'Tis not unlike, and not unfit.

2*nd Sol.* I'll tell thee better, 'tis to make an exchange,—relieve guard; Peter intends to tame the lady Catharine in Ivan's cell.

Mirov. He dares not.

2*nd Sol.* So much the worse for him.

1*st Sol.* 'Tis time there were some change.

3*rd Sol.* Aye, fifteen years this very day, Ivan has been a prisoner here.

Mirov. Poor youth! once Russia's Emperor proclaimed.

2*nd. Sol.* A change, indeed! the very thought should reconcile thee to thy fate, Lieutenant?

Mirov. Thou mule! dost think that minds like mine can peace extract from such a morbid source? say that the thought should give me double motive for rebellion; say I have more than selfish reasons to revolt against injustice; say that I look upon his darker fate; say that I add his sorrow to my own, and have a twofold cause in which to move!

2*nd Sol.* Dost thou know what thou'rt called in the regiment, when they don't chuse to mention thy name?

Mirov. That which I am, perhaps.

2*nd. Sol.* Right;—Master Mysterious!

Mirov. Granted,—too good for vice to spell my very name, and too profound for shallow-sighted things like thee, to see what lies beneath the surface of my brain.

2*nd Sol.* Some men there are that grow too deep to understand themselves; thou takest me in good part, Lieutenant?

Mirov. I take thee as I should, well-meant, and better understood.

1*st Sol.* To your posts, instantly; the strangers are moving this way, gentlemen.

Mirov. 'Tis, certe! retire, my friends. [*to some soldiers in the back ground*] You keep on watch with me; [*to the* 1*st*, 2*nd, and* 3*rd Soldier*] we'll reconnoitre 'bout the fortress, to hear what we can hear, and see what we can see.

3*rd Sol.* 'Tis all within the line of duty.

Mirov. In truth, they are of very portly appearance!

1*st Sol.* They are here.

Mirov. Haste, let us cover our retreat.

[*Exeunt* MIROVITCH *and Soldiers.*

Enter CZAR, *attended by Count* LEOF, VOLKOFF, *Baron* STERNBERG, *Baron* KORF, *and General* MUNICH.

Czar. 'Now, Gentlemen, attend, I pray you, to 'my injunctions; this paper, signed by my hand, 'gives to the bearers of it, free access to every part 'of this same castle Schusselberg. I will conceal 'the ensigns of my dignity, and Leof to the prince 'shall represent me; but first, we'll make our local 'observations. In this disguise, Berednikoff may 'fail to know us; but if it fit the occasion, ere we 'depart we may proclaim ourselves.'

Korf. 'And I presume I, too, may pass un-'noticed; he has not seen me for these fourteen 'years.'

Volk. 'I would not wager that, good Korf, the 'more confined the sphere of observation, the more 'exact is its direction; and the less charged the 'memory, the deeper graven are the events which it 'records.'

Czar. You may be right, friend Volkoff, but we will try the event; haste, let us look about the fort.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MIROVITCH *and Soldiers.*

Mirov. Scarce could I catch a word, the plotters spoke so low.

1*st Sol.* I do believe the Czar is one amongst them.

Mirov. I think so too.

Enter the Governor BEREDNIKOFF.

2*nd. Sol.* Aye, and 'tis he that is the most disguised.

Mirov. [*to* BEREDNIKOFF] How now, Governor, that you are not at your corner-post, when visitors of so much importance come about you?

Gov. How! what visitors, say Mirovitch?

Mirov. What think you of the Czar himself?

Gov. The Czar! is't possible?

[*Exit, hastily, Governor.*

1*st Sol.* In truth, you've scared him.

2*nd Sol.* Should it not be the Czar?

Mirov. I long to be assured; for if it is, 'twere now, perhaps, a happy time to ask the restitution of the forfeited estates of Mirovitch, which have so long been due to me.

1*st Sol.* I wish you all success, Lieutenant, but for my part I doubt it much.

Mirov. I'll persevere, till they are wearied out by my petitions, and grant my prayer in pity to themselves.

1*st Sol.* I would not hazard one day's pay upon thy chance; audacious Kate gains every day more power.

Mirov. The lands are fat, indeed.

2*nd Sol.* And she is thrifty.

3*rd. Sol.* Subjects like thee, 'tis policy to starve.

2nd Sol. When the bold lion feels the qualms of hunger, he seeks with dauntless toil and keen avidity his prey; but feed him well, and give him all the creature needs, in royal ease he readily reposes, as graciously as any lady's lap-dog.

1st. Sol. Aye, sooth, indeed, for some bold enterprise, thou'rt fit and ready, when Catharine finds some apt occasion for thy arm.

2nd Sol. And then, mayhap, she will most graciously reward thee, by giving to thee that which is already thine; or shouldst thou lose thy life in the achievement, she'll keep the lands, and set upon thy grave a stone, that will declare with as much feeling as herself for what thou didst, thy merit, and misfortunes.

Mirov. If 'tis for this she keeps me in subjection, then let her learn to feel; lions there are, which, in undue restraint, live patient and submissive for a time, but, in the end, collecting all their fire, turn with fierce rage against their sordid keeper.

1st. Sol. But try the temper of the Czar; perhaps he's sober.

Mirov. And if at night he drown the thoughts of Mirovitch, what will avail, that now he hear me; yet as I have proposed, I will petition; they come this way again, let us retire and watch our opportunity. [*Exeunt* MIROVITCH *and Soldiers.*

SCENE IV.—*A Cell—The interior of the Fortress of Schusselberg—Prince* IVAN *seated on a bundle of straw, a lamp burns near him, he has a leaf in his hand on which he appears to have been making some calculation.*

Ivan. Yes, 'tis fifteen years to-day! full fifteen years I have been here a prisoner, full fifteen years, thou glorious sun, since I have hailed in thy fair light the morn! Oh potent source of health, of life, of joy, must thou then never shine again for me? shall this pale lamp be still my sole companion? Well, well, 'tis light enough to shew me all the horrors that surround me; e'en here, there may be mercy; yes, idle fancy is at least arrested, and true it is, that she can ever wrap the unseen in darker colours than the truth has drawn it. Ah, I remember (as I was hither led), a haggard wretch who sat beneath a hawthorn bush, on which, in sparkling beauty, had the frost of keen December set the pearly icicle—like the declining year the creature seemed; yet I could see a smile upon that face, and the bright glow of heaven-born peace, and inward hope, and joy, shot like a sun-beam from his hollow eye, gladdening the very desolation time had made upon him—his beard was long, and with surrounding snows in whiteness vied—scarce was he covered from the piercing cold, he held upon his knee a broken platter, where bones, and crusts, and many-coloured scraps were mingled; and in the luxury of full content he ate his meal, whilst in the

bounty of his soul he threw a morsel to the faithful dog, which crouched beside him, looking, expecting, patient, waiting still the welcome tribute. Blest was this man, for the wide canopy of heaven to him displayed its glories, happy was he, for he could claim a friend, and was not separated from him!

Enter Vlassief, *and* Ischekin—Vlassief *takes up a pitcher and looks within it.*

Vlass. Ha! there's enough to serve him two days longer. Ivan is not so fond of drink as Peter.

Isch. He who rejects the grape, will sometimes like to quaff the stronger juice, and who preserves his moderation, occasion lacking him to sin, may be, where opportunity occurs, as deep a sinner as the murderer Cain.

Vlass. Let's try how he will like the smell of something good.

Isch. You draw the reins too tight, good Master Vlassieff.

Ivan. Oh would I knew the hour!

Isch. Poor soul, he talks of time.

Ivan. Still forbid to speak to me?

Vlass. I cannot talk the finger-tongue, can'st thou?

Isch. Not a jot, not a jot, but by great Peter I will tell him——

Vlass. Better not open thy mouth for that purpose—to-morrow is examination day.

Isch. What's become of the old time-piece he used to hug so closely.

Vlass. The hungry vermin, finding nothing better, devoured it; as if they thought time was no friend to Ivan.

Isch. Why, dull pate, didst not sooner think upon the means?

[Ischekin *writes the hour on a piece of paper, and presents it to* IVAN, IVAN *kisses the paper.*

Ivan. 'Tis twelve! the sun has reached his greatest height o'er Petersburgh! Generous man! I thank you! Oh how delightful is the smallest particle of aught that borders on intelligence, to him who lives in utter darkness of all that passes round him. Generous man! I know thy kindness cannot reach me further, yet for this simple act, I'll give thee credit for a world of favour, and with a grateful heart, the debt of the intention pay.

Vlass. What a wild joy lights in his eye, and all about the hour.

Isch. Poor youth! doubtless he sighs to know how long 'twill be, ere he shall be released from this hard life, to share a better fate hereafter.

Vlass. Who likes to sink on such a chance, so let him; for my own part, I'd rather have a crampt existence in a cockle-shell, than die to seek a wider scale of being.

Isch. So every knave and every coward would; not that I mean to say thou art or one or t'other.

Vlass. The one confess'd, and t'other is to try; hence, on the doubt it is, I choose a mixture of the good and evil here, to the sad chance of losing all hereafter. [*The drum beats.*

Isch. Hark, they are drawing up, we must proceed.

Ivan. Oh! would I might obey the cheerful summons.

Vlass. 'Tis earlier than usual.

Isch. To-day thou knowest there is a change of guard.

Vlass. Ah true, I had forgotten.

[*The drum again.*

Ivan. Can I not be a servant to the call?

[IVAN *rises and appears agitated.*

Isch. Alas, indeed!

Vlass. Move on.

Isch. Would Heaven that I had never had this place! each time we turn the key, he feels a mortal pang.

Vlass. We shall be nobly pensioned, think of that. [*Exeunt* Vlassief *and* Ischekin.

[*The sound of the drum and trumpet continues,* IVAN *rises and follows them with the utmost emotion to the farthest part of the Stage.*

Ivan. Oh could I follow them! could I but see a glimpse of day-light—ah! now they turn the key. It opens, alas! it opens, but not for me! 'tis shut again—all, all is dark, dark as the fate of Ivan.

[*He sighs, and stretches himself on the straw, the scene closes.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Cell of* IVAN.—IVAN *stretched on his couch. Enter* Vlassief *and* Ischekin, IVAN *raises himself on their entering.*

Vlass. 'Tis rather strange that the order should extend to the visiting this cell.

Isch. With half an eye thou mightest perceive that is their only object in coming here.

Vlass. Aye, indeed! I thank thee for the thought, dost know any of the strangers?

Isch. No, but I suspect them; something may be done, perhaps, to soften the fate of the prisoner.

Ivan. Ah, indeed! can I hope any thing?

Vlass. I hear them coming, we must proceed to the outer guard. [*Exeunt* Vlassief *and* Ischekin.

Enter the CZAR, *Count* LEOF, MUNICH, KORF, VOLKONSKY, STERNBERG.

Czar. [*apart to officers*] 'Do not seem to ob-'serve him yet. [CZAR *looking about*] Oh Munich! 'what a place is this for one who once was Russia's 'emperor proclaimed.' [*Appearing affected.*

Munich. 'My heart bleeds for him.'

Ivan. [*apart*] 'Oh Heaven! thou dost inspire 'me with the thought! Yes, yes, it must be so—the 'portrait Ischekin shewed me but a few days ago, 'clearly in this obscurity I recognise the features.'

[KORF *speaks apart to the* CZAR.

Czar. 'I long to speak to him, but my heart 'sinks.'

Korf. 'He appears to consider us very atten- 'tively.'

Ivan. 'Oh Thou All-gracious! let me not plead 'in vain.'

Munich. 'Shall I address him, Sire?'

Czar. 'Wait—in a moment—the sight has over- 'powered me.'

Ivan. [*advances and kneels to the* CZAR] 'Oh 'pitying Heaven! let me not plead in vain! My 'prince, I know you—you are the master here—you 'can redress me, you can mitigate the hardships of 'my fate, deign, then, my gracious sovereign, to 'consider my complaint—fifteen long years I have 'been here a prisoner—the light of day and the 'untainted breath of nature alike are strangers to me; 'and yet Heaven knows that mortal man I never 'yet offended, that my high birth alone is all my 'crime.'

Czar. 'Rise, dearest Ivan, I cannot see you 'thus; my soul is torn,—it is too much!'

[*Raises and embraces him.*

Ivan. 'You weep! and does my fate affect 'you? 'tis a long time since man has wept for me.'

Czar. 'Oh, Leof, why did I not come sooner 'here?'

Ivan. 'I sigh not, Czar, for any outward pomp; 'let me but breathe the common breath of nature; 'let me but see the glorious daylight, and all my 'wishes with my self connected are exhausted.'

[*The Officers appear affected.*

Czar. 'Have I, then, had the power to mitigate 'his sufferings and have neglected it? Oh! 'tis a 'crying sin of deep omission 'gainst me, that may 'condemn me in eternal records.'

Volk. 'I can defend your majesty in that, you 'never had the power till now.'

Korf. 'No, no! Elizabeth, your aunt, took care 'of that.'

Ivan. 'Oh happy hour!'

Czar. 'Good Ivan, be consoled: be witness, 'gentlemen, here on my sword I swear to make the 'prince henceforth my first concern. Oh! how I 'curse that proud abuse of power, that thus has 'dared inhume a royal offspring whose right but—'

Ivan. 'Forget the past, my gracious sovereign; 'in your high presence, in your pitying assurances, 'already my afflictions are subdued.'

Munich. 'It was not here, I think, the Prince's 'infant years were past.'

Czar. 'Have you, dear Ivan, any recollection of 'what befel you in your earliest life?'

Ivan. 'Alas! my honored liege, from the first 'moment I became acquainted that I was made the 'offence for which my parents were oppressed, I 'have not ceased to mourn for them, who yet have 'never ceased to mourn for me; and till at Schus-'selberg they stationed me alone, from fortress here 'to fortress there perpetually they led us, and ever 'were our guards the most inhuman of mankind!'

Czar. Tell me the names of some of these if yet they have existence, I still will make them feel I am

an Emperor, who will have justice tho' I mercy love!

Ivan. 'Believe me, Sire, they have been long 'forgotten.'

Czar. 'And were they all alike? all equally un-'merciful?'

Ivan. 'Oh, no, no, no, no! there was one, 'who, like a pitying angel, waited on us; who 'would devote each leisure moment to instruct my 'infancy,'—correct each vagrant and impatient thought,—bid me look up to yon bright throne for hope, for patience, consolation, rest, and glory! Oh, dearly-cherished lessons! I have remembered, have recounted, soothed myself, and tried to practise every honored precept! oh God! could I but see that good man's face again!

Czar. 'And he?'

Ivan. 'Was soon displaced for his compassion.'

Czar. 'But is his name forgotten too?'

Ivan. 'Ah, Sire! if it were possible to look 'into my heart, that honored name were found en-'graven on it. They called him Korf!'

[KORF *bursts into tears. The* CZAR *presses his hand and weeps.*

Czar. 'Generous Korf! see now how true it is, 'a good deed rarely is forgotten. Oh! 'tis too much.'

Ivan. Oh, gracious Providence! can it indeed be? Do my senses deceive me? can there be so much bliss for Ivan? can it be possible? [*looking attentively at* KORF] It is, it is! my prayers are heard! [*Falls on his neck weeping.*

Korf. 'My Prince! my long lost Ivan!'

Czar. 'Come with me, Leof, I must retire a 'little, I'm not heart-proof to this.'

[*Exeunt* CZAR, LEOF, *and* VOLKONSKY.

Ivan. 'My friend! my kind instructor! my 'second father!

Korf. 'Generous youth; still to remember, 'through fifteen years captivity, those trifling 'services, that scarcely merited thy passing thanks.'

Ivan. 'Ah! when I never knew a friend except 'in thee, strange it had been if, in my morning or 'my even prayers, thy honored name were ever once 'omitted!'

Korf. 'Shall so much promise still be here im-'mured? No, no, the heart of Peter is as noble as 'tis guileless—thou hast affected him.'

Ivan. 'Can I rely, then, on his future favour?'

Korf. 'Yes, rest assured of that.'

Ivan. 'I will believe it; the being that could 'me this delight, has not a common soul; but yet 'I sometimes overhear a word that makes me doubt-'ful of his better fate.'

Korf. 'From thence, and from your interview, 'tho' short, indeed, what would you argue of the 'Emperor.

Ivan. 'Alas, my friend! 'tis not for me to say; 'all in my mind must wear a tincture of the gloom 'by which I live enveloped—but if my countrymen 'can tamely see me wronged, may we not equally 'suppose that rebel vice, and mad ambition, they'll 'not dare to oppose, when these may seek occasion

'to subdue an emperor, whose greatest fault seems 'but too much indulgence for his subjects.'

Korf. 'It is enough—nor bolts nor bars can 'rest 'the mind's enlargement;' and it would seem that each oppressive circumstance has equally respected thy outward form, such seeming vigour,* growth, and beauty, in a clime like this, old as I am, I look and wonder still.

Ivan. Why thou hast taught me, Korf, that certain plants, deprived of yon bright beam, would lose their gentle tender existence; man, of a nobler nature, bears a ray of that divinity within him; hope, reason, and religion, lighten every gloom, the mind, supported hence, the inferior mortal frame is influenced in the mean, it lives, it combats with the evil, and, from long habit, reconciles the bane.

Korf. Oh happiest moment of my life! I see, I hear thee, all thy infant bloom and promise ripened into excellence. Come, let us join the Czar, and look about the Fort, perhaps he'll take thee with him to the capital.

Ivan. Lead, lead the way, good Korf! Bounteous Heaven! angels have visited me! The daylight beams in Schusselberg.

Korf. Thou shalt be happy, Ivan, and be free.

[*Exeunt together.*

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* Prince Ivan was above six feet high, of an elegant figure, and possessed a fine open engaging countenance.

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Palace of Peterhoff.* CATHARINE *on an elevated chair of State. Princess* DASHKOFF, *the Hetman* RAZUMOFFSKY, PANIN, ODART, PASSICK, GLEBOFF, ORLOFF, *the Archbishop of* NOVGOROD, *&c. &c.*

Cath. The Czar, my friends, is still at Schüsselberg, but for this paper, what think ye of it?

Razu. [*rising*] Why it confirms the keen suspicions of the friends of Russia; slight is the veil that would conceal the intentions of the Emperor; your majesty, in speed to imprison, to exclude Paul Petrovitch the throne, in short, to place the imperial crown on Ivan's brow—how best to baffle a plot so iniquitous, here are we met to take into request; and first, I vote to seize the person of the Czar—till that pass be effected, all other efforts will be found abortive. [*Sits.*

Pan. [*rises*] That measure I support, secure the Czar, let him be closely guarded till ye've arranged your plans, and brought him to consent to terms more advantageous to the welfare of the nation than those he now proposes.

Orloff. [*rises*] I urge the same necessity.

Pan. These terms if he refuse, you must decide and act against him like a rebel subject.

Nov. And think you Peter will consent to that? can he be made to compromise? he who, perhaps, this moment fixes on the spot in which our Empress is to be inhumed; already dips in deadly poison the dagger that shall drink the blood of Paul?

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Gods! can my countrymen thus tamely meditate, and indolently let this second Herod stride on to the bloody execution? why not, whilst the occasion offers of his absence, seize the time, resolve the instant, and immediate act?

Cath. 'Twill be too late when Peter is returned: what you neglect to do for him, he will not fail to do for you.

Razu. Let, then, the Czar be instantly arrested, and for that purpose, let us send a trusty guard to meet him midway, as he here returns, so is his purpose foiled, and we have leisure to reflect a moment, to think what ought to follow.

Pass. 'No, I say no! let us dispatch him.' [CATHARINE *appears to shudder*] 'Is none here 'bold enough? I am the man, then, and I will do it 'in the face of all his court; whilst Peter lives, Paul 'Petrovitch is not. Think you this Emperor has 'no friends in Russia? think of those acts which at 'the first made him so popular; think of those men 'whom he has raised to power, whose interest 'tis 'to keep the Czar in place; these can persuade the 'multitude, and keep in pay and arms a powerful 'host; yet, independent of this selfish crew, Peter 'all indolent, averse to business as he is, has 'stronger partisans at home, and e'en abroad; so, 'whilst he is allowed to live in prison, Russia will 'still be drenched in civil wars—do what ye do 'effectually—to spare the million sacrifice the man, 'a man than none I know can better now be spared.'

[CATHARINE *appears to be shocked.*

Pan. Away, away! we want no butcherings in

Russia, when prisons fail to keep the peace, 'tis then too soon to do a deed like this.

Pass. [*apart*] Aye, but I'll set about it, and the instant.

Cath. 'Howe'er essential to the well-being of 'our rising state, however much we sigh for home 'tranquillity and foreign friendship, we do sincerely 'feel, too zealous Passick, our pitying heart grief-'struck, that we must of necessity so far arrest the 'senseless progress of the Czar, as now to seek to 'make him prisoner;' no, tho' 'tis certain that he would deprive his son of life, and would imprison me, yet, yet, forgive me, Russia, I cannot all at once forget I am a wife, that Peter is the father of Paul Petrovitch. Let our first deeds be signalized by mercy, so may the God of Justice prosper us!

[*Weeps.*

Orloff. And so say I, my gracious Sovereign; effect from hence your own escape, your noble friends will hasten to protect you, molest not Peter now, let him like you collect his troops, and let our courage and the sword decide it.

Dash. Well said, my friend—in every varied commerce of society, I see no interest but in open dealing.

Pan. I pray Heaven spare our countrymen in the event.

Orloff. In thus determining our sovereign's fate, 'tis my belief there will be less of bloodshed, than if we leave to dull delays, and foreign interference, our country's cause to settle.

Odart. Twice is the battle won,
That ends e'er rises twice on it the sun.

Razu. I grant the probability of that our General urges.

Pan. And that determined, what's the next step expedient to be taken?

Odart. In the successful termination of the combat, to vest supreme authority in Catharine's hands, should it not be? [*apart*] At least 'tis that at which she aims.

Nov. That's a pretension I'll most ardently support.

Orloff. And I with my heart's blood defend.

Pan. And I, I stedfastly oppose it; let Catharine, as 'tis meet she should, be made the Regent of the Russias, and let the title Emperor devolve on Paul.

Razu. Why that doth seem, indeed, most safe.

Pan. 'By holy Paul, all other measures may 'betray the cause they're meant to serve.'

Razu. 'He rises most securely, who gains the 'pinnacle of glory step by step.'

Cath. 'In arts mechanical, my Lord, that maxim 'always must be good, but there's no intermediate 'path to royalty from whence I tower—the difference 'of a name is all the question.'

Pan. 'Pardon me, madam, that I now perceive 'your aims, and I can measure to a hair, your 'power's extent, aye every tittle that same power can 'work, and, seeing that, I know where you should 'pause. You have repeated it a hundred times, to 'be the mother of the Emperor was the grand sum-'mit of your soul's ambition—does that seem now

'too little for your wishes? You would remove your
'son from empire, but say, what right have you to
'rule alone? Think you this ancient warlike nation
'will acknowledge a simple Countess of Anhalt?
'Think you our hardy sons will not be plotting in
'favour of great Peter's race, whilst one of them is
'held in prison, and groans another in a lonesome
'dungeon? I am your friend, my country's friend,
'so far an enemy to Peter, as I consider him unfit
'to wield the sceptre of a realm like this; but his
'posterity, to whom it may please Heaven to grant
'more skill for government, their interest in your
'cause I'll still maintain. Give up, then, madam,
'your extreme pretensions, think it no common for-
'tune if ye evade the danger that presses on you;
'convince the world you have an honest motive to
'justify these violent proceedings; prove to them
'that your son, Paul Petrovitch, is the first object of
'your high concern.'

[*A pause ensues, and all appear surprised.*

Dash. 'What says your Majesty to this?'

Cath. 'I grant the arguments of our enlight-
'ened friend seem full of truth, of powerful reason,
'and persuasive justice, but yet permit me to ob-
'serve, I know the Russians, know if they be but
'governed 'tis little question with them the origin
'of those who rule—nor would I seek in this
'respect to change them—administering with lenity
'what justice prompts, I would not leave them
'e'en a shadow of pretext to murmur at the legisla-
'tion. You talk of dread revolts, my Lord; have
'you forgotten history records, 'tis most in Re-

'gencies rebellion fattens, and widest spreads the 'pestilence of discontent, where lives no power 'determinate?' so is he twice a king, who, reigning but by proxy, governs well; and doubly fortunate that state should deem itself, thus being circumstanced, which, in the mean, escapes the storms of civil discord, and of foreign strife. Ask your own heart, my Lord, should we have needed to resort to this, had Peter guided with a steady hand the reins of government? If to supremacy we tower our wishes, is't not the common welfare we've in view? Is't not the more securely to preserve the rights of Paul? too young himself, he long shall be in fitting judgment our realm to rule; and in discernment, giving him to see in whom he should confide; and who, my lord, so little likely to abuse the power transferred, as one so near allied to him as I am? and finally, I seek to nobly recompence those friends who all like you assist me to defend him.

Pan. To prove the gratitude you owe the statesman, 'twere wretched policy to make the state dependent.

Razu. The intention may be good; the mischief that may hence arise, is first to be considered.

Nov. Even from ill-intentioned deeds heaven sometimes works effectual good, therefore we ought to hope what is well meant, well managed, well designed, should, in the execution, good produce.

Pan. Yet lacking wisdom, or experience wanting, we may do wrong, however pure the thought; 'tis to contest the wisdom of the measure, not to dispute the grace of the design, we now are met.

Razu. But to our judgment as we good discern, so we should work.

Orloff. Else we forget our final interest——

Odart. To serve the prince of darkness, who, for some purpose that we know not yet, must have his subjects as well as other mighty potentates.

Dash. Aye, but the grievance, Odart, there, work as you will, and serve him as you can, perpetual anguish is the sole reward.

Nov. Such recompense we often meet from earthly rulers.

Odart. For our best actions are susceptible of foul interpretation, and there's a vice in some men's minds, that never fails with nicest skill to blacken excellence, and that so subtilly, and so darkly, it would require something 'bove common sight to pierce the veil they make, and see a ray of virtue in the cloud; heaven is not greatness in their murky thought; Sol has no splendour in their jaundiced eye, and all creation's wonders are as naught before them.

Pan. But if we fail to serve the cause of virtue, because, forsooth, here we can have no sacred credit for it, we make a very vain pretence to worth, we seek the applause of men, before our own respect, above approving heaven.

Cath. My generous friends, I do intreat you once more think amongst yourselves, and let me be apprised of the result. I seek in all things to be guided by your counsels, but in this one distinction of a name, in which we see the dearer interest of our son concerned, for that maternal duty still will lead

us to contend—fixed are our sentiments as this great empire in the spacious earth—according to our foresight and most impartial judgment, predetermined are our plans. If built in vanity, in pride, in mad ambition these, soon must the fragile fabric totter in decay; no maxim general currency can gain that has not sprung in truth; no pile can stand, that wants a just foundation. This night at Petersburgh I hope to meet you—to-morrow, may it please heaven to decide our cause, and in the event spare our beloved countrymen.

Pan. We are your Majesty's devoted subjects, I dare believe her happiness is what we all have most at heart—we'll meet again ere you reach Petersburgh.

Pass. [*apart*] And I'll to work the instant.

[*Exeunt all but* CATHARINE *and* DASHKOFF; *as* ORLOFF *is going out,* CATHARINE *recalls him.*

Cath. [*to* ORLOFF] General, one word with you.

Orloff. My pleasure to obey your Majesty, I seek some opportunity for proof.

Cath. [*to* DASHKOFF] In all haste, Princess, I'll despatch my business here, and meet you in the study.

Dash. I'll wait your leisure, madam.

[*Exit* DASHKOFF.

Cath. This night, good Orloff, as I have said, 'tis my intent to try to effect my escape to Petersburgh; I well perceive there's not an hour to lose. Return this instant to the capital, there raise your

faithful regiment; that done, ye shall be joined by others, whom Dashkoff, Novgorod, and the Hetman Razumoffsky have been disposing—take this key, the admittance into the summer house that skirts the garden, at the foot of which the Neva runs—in this same house, foreseeing all, some nights past I've reposed; hither, soon as the occasion shall be ripe, (soon as you shall proclaim me Empress of the Russias) send, with a brief intelligence, some trusty persons; with them I will return, and, when expedient, will appear amongst you.

Orloff. Your Majesty needs only courage; I will be prompt, be secret, and be bold; when daring enterprise has fixed her flight, the sooner that she spreads her eagle wing the better.

Cath. 'Tis on thy courage most I build my hopes.

Orloff. Your Majesty shall speedily be served —rely on my good fortune. [*Exit* ORLOFF.

Cath. Now for the Princess!

[*Exit* CATHARINE.

SCENE III.—*Study at the Palace of Peterhoff— Princess* DASHKOFF, *a book in her hand.*

Enter CATHARINE.

Cath. Now, Dashkoff, tell me, friend, what thinkest thou of this Panim?

Dash. So bold, I must confess, I did not think to find him, yet I was pleased with his sincerity.

Cath. True; but the dearer interest which inspired him——

Dash. There seemed much justice in his argument.

Cath. First hear what I've to urge: to place Paul Petrovitch upon the throne, I know he wishes; but mark me, to occupy himself the second place, or rather first except in nomination, is the next step he languishes to take; yes, he would govern in the name of Paul.

Dash. Ah, ah! I failed to see that; and construed all his warmth pure patriotic zeal.

Cath. And sooner than I that would suffer, I'd let the sluggard Peter drone upon the royal couch, imprison me, and Petrovitch abandon. It is not that I do not think the Count a man of passing honesty; yes, yes, I grant him that, whilst I perceive his mind of that same stamp, that having been unused to sovereign power, the circumstantial difference, the local cause, would so far change the creature, that perched upon the royal pinnacle, I see him giddy with the mighty height, and tempted to betray his own salvation, or yet worse, the happiness of Russia. Oh! 'tis a soul, than none less fitted for supremacy, and yet withal an instrument, with which supremacy can ne'er dispense; kept as a subject, he, like the pendent arm, the body serving, is grace, is use, is vigor! is necessity! a noble pillar of the state, that ornaments the prouder weight it bears.

Dash. Faithful to every trust in which engaged,

there is not ought could bribe him to forsake the interest of his master.

Cath. Nor do I mean to say, that prompted by a thirst of sway, or by ungovernable ambition led, the Count is aiming to be first amongst us; no, 'tis a certain prepossession of his superior skill for government which leads him on; he is for ever forming plans, grand innovations, and extraneous systems, and long with Peter has essayed in vain to carry into effect his novel projects, but the weak monarch's indolence still foiled him, so now, with ardent hope, he seeks the grand accomplishment with Paul.

Dash. That nice discrimination was bestowed for highest purposes.

Cath. And I, whilst I abet his wiser views, must check, for Russia's sake, his speculative flights; for infant states, and barbarous realms, kingdoms like this, bear not with sudden changes in their customs, we must proceed with cool discretion, sturdy is ignorance in every clime; 'tis only where refinement has enlarged, and shed around intelligence her light, that long-established forms may be invaded, even when most assuredly for the general benefit.

Dash. Seen, then, the present disposition of the Count, what must be done to make him think as we do, in short, to render him the passive subject?

Cath. To gain that pass, my friend, would be the very summit of our policy.

Dash. Shall I attempt, then, his conversion?

Cath. But how?

Dash. The motive you're assured——

Cath. Is purest friendship.

Dash. You know how much the Count esteems me; and though I am, compared with him in years, a very infant, yet his respect for my opinion amounts almost to veneration.

Cath. 'Tis true; and I have heard, indeed, for eyes it boots a woman nought, so she can talk; and praise, is never more acceptable than when address'd to one like Panim, somewhat advanced in years, by youth and beauty; but yet I doubt, my friend, the very virtue of your character, that reputation you enjoy so singular withal, will raise a barrier to that project.

Dash. Your Majesty mistakes the matter totally, 'tis on that very character that I presume; and trust me, madam, where vice in woman can make one honest votary, in wiser men, virtue shall form the thousand!

Cath. But yet I cannot understand what you propose.

Dash. Simply, to speak the truth as I behold it; if that effect our purpose, good are the means employed, and good may be the end attained; but if this fail, other adoption must be had, or failure be endured; your Majesty may know, that to the truth I'd sacrifice my life.

Cath. Dear Princess, brightest jewel of my crown, go on and prosper. I see without thee Catharine were not Catharine.

Dash. In the mean time, take care, your Majesty, that brutal Passick nothing shall attempt to make your name contemptible for ever—let not the example of your husband prompt you to any measure you would blush to see recorded.

Cath. Trust me for that, my friend, though well 'tis known the Czar's design with us is nothing less than murder, yet, if on our side he be made a prisoner, we will a just example set, how kings so circumstanced should be respected.

Dash. That thought is worthy Catharine. I will proceed the instant—already I've secured the regiment of Preobajensky, they wait my instant warning. [*Exit* DASHKOFF.

Cath. And now for action. When daring enterprise has fixed her flight, the sooner that she spreads her eagle wing the better—so says the valiant Orloff! —so thinks determined Catharine!

[*Exit* CATHARINE.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Peterhoff.*

Enter the CZAR, MUNICH, KORF, LEOF, STERNBERG; ISMAEL *meeting them.*

Ism. Your Majesty is welcome back to Peterhoff, most opportunely is he now arrived; the Empress has disappeared, and whither gone we know not.

Omnes. Gone! gone!

Czar. The Empress gone! how, how has she escaped?

Ism. 'Your Majesty well knows, that on account of the great festival here to be celebrated of 'Peter and of Paul, the Empress has, for some 'nights past, slept in the summer house, and thence 'she has effected her escape; and it is evident, the 'means concerted during your absence at Schussel-'berg, for here, not many hours ago, was held a 'formidable council, present at which, I learnt for 'satisfaction of your Majesty, was Panin, Razu-'moffsky, Odart, Novgorod, Passick, Gleboff, and 'many others.'

Czar. Which render our case dangerous enough—my Lords, what's to be done in this predicament?

Stern. I know well what ought to have been done some weeks ago—your Majesty was ever too confiding.

Enter a Messenger, disguised as a Peasant, with a paper, which he gives to the CZAR.

Messenger. I am charged, in all haste, to give this to your Majesty, it comes from faithful Bressen.

[*Exit Messenger.*

Czar. From faithful Bressen! 'tis well said, let's hear what new disasters. [*reads*] '"Your 'Majesty must haste to arm—all Petersburgh is in 'commotion, the troops are fighting 'gainst the 'people, nothing but cries are heard of "Long live 'Catharine"—haste, Sire, to march against the 'rebels; you still have many friends in Petersburgh; 'I fly to exert myself in your defence; I will be 'ready to meet you with all the force I can collect.

'*Signed*, BRESSEN.'" What an unexpected stroke is this? what's your advice, my friends, what's to be done?

Munich. There is but one thing that a king should do in such a case—call up the guards that now surround you, march on to Cronstadt, secure that port, and you are safe, and may then go to Petersburgh; I will this instant animate the troops; we need but shew ourselves, the day is ours!

Stern. I long to shew the rebels what a few loyal subjects can effect.

Czar. Will it be right to expose my person to the foe?

Munich. It is impossible that Catharine can have won already to her cause all Petersburgh, she who has no just pretension to the crown—away,

Sire, with all idle fancies; cowards would only hesitate in such a case.

Czar. Let us prepare, at least, my friends—in the mean time I will reflect upon it.

Korf. But rest, your Majesty, at Peterhoff, if more secure you think it; only remember, Sire, your faithful subjects who have your interest most sincere at heart, will go without you.

Czar. Alas! poor Ivan!

Leof. [*apart*] Alas! poor Peter!

Czar. Korf, you must tell him our misfortune.

Korf. No doubt, your Majesty, he will proceed with us.

Enter hastily Countess VORONTZOFF.

Countess. My Lord, what means this clamour 'bout the palace? All is not well at Petersburgh, I fear.

Czar. All is not well at Peterhoff, I'm sure.

Stern. The fact is, Madam, Catharine has escaped, and all's in arms.

Countess. Escaped! Distraction! Then are we lost, indeed.

Czar. Did I not tell you 'twas a woman capable of any thing? "Long live the Empress Catherine" is all the cry.

Countess. Ah, woe is me! My mortal foe the wicked Dashkoff is concerned in this. What has your Majesty resolved to do?

Czar. Immediately to summon all the guards, to march to Cronstadt, secure that pass, then on to Petersburgh.

Countess. What, with a hundred men, presume to meet perhaps a hundred thousand? Oh what unheard of madness this, to expose your sacred person to a tribe of ruffians—who can have counselled this?

Omnes. We, we, madam, in our reverence for the Czar.

Countess, Thou hast, then, no friend left, unhappy Peter!

Munich. See now, my friends, where women are concerned, what good can be effected?

Korf. [*apart*] Say, too, where women of a certain cast have sway, will Heaven befriend our steps?

Munich. How many kings have thus been overthrown!

Czar. Do not believe, my friends, that I can be so easily persuaded.

Countess. Oh, wretched that I am!

Munich. Fond madam, deign but to consider the danger that awaits his Majesty in staying here, where, in a few short hours, the enemy may reach him—he has no friends to join him here, no succours to depend upon.

Countess. At all events, we are undone, then.

Korf. Fie on't, let not your Majesty be thus betrayed by female weakness. How many instances history records of kingdoms that have thus been lost; of kings untimely ruined, that else had lived a blessing to their country.

Munich. Come, then, my honored Liege, let us proceed; no sword shall reach your heart, till thro' my body it has pierced. What can I say more!

Leof. Your vessel ready lies at anchor.

Stern. Sire, if you let the women now prevail, you are lost for ever.

Czar. Good friends, your faithful services, your long experience, demand my gratitude and my obedience; I yield implicitly to your advice.

Munich. Then we will move the instant.

Czar. Oh, faithless fortune, 'tis thy design, I half foresee, to jilt me—happy the man who never wore a crown!

Countess. And happy she who never loved a king.

Omnes. To arms! to arms! our country and our king? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The front of the Imperial Palace of Petersburgh*—CATHARINE'S *arrival—she ascends a balcony in the front of the Palace, accompanied by Princess* DASHKOFF. *Troops of Soldiers crowd in to welcome her with loud hurras.*

Enter ORLOFF, GLEBOFF, PASSICK, NOVGOROD, *and Prince* POTEMKIN.

Orloff. Your Majesty has been expected with impatience two hours, your faithful troops have been in arms.

Cath. My generous countrymen! your unhappy Empress flies to you to 'scape destruction; flies from the palace of the Emperor! a deadly plot has been concerted 'gainst us; this night it was intended to murder me and Petrovitch together. Oh! do I live to tell it, the husband and the father are the

instigators. To you, brave Russians, I submit my cause, to you I come for shelter and protection; to you I dare confide myself, my darling child: ye will not, valiant countrymen, forsake the rightful heir of Russia; ye will not, in an hour like this, the mother of your future Emperor abandon?

Omnes. No, no, we swear to die in your defence!

Orloff. Hurra! long live the Empress Catharine!

Omnes. Long live the Empress Catharine!

Enter RAZUMOFFSKY *with more troops, and a chaplain bearing a crucifix, on which the Soldiers take the oath of allegiance.*

Omnes. We swear to die in your defence. Long live the Empress!

Enter hastily PANIN, *with the young* PAUL PETROVITCH *in his arms.*

Pan. Behold, my countrymen, your future Emperor! this moment have I snatched him from a cruel death; scarce had I entered his apartment, when a ruffian band, armed for the purpose of destruction, rushed in upon us—my valiant troops quickly dispersed them; fortune is on our side, the day is ours, my friends!

Omnes. Long live Paul Petrovitch!

Pan. Will ye not on, my countrymen, to battle, to save the heir of Russia; will ye not, for his sake, guard, fight for, and defend the mother's sacred person?

Omnes. To conquer or to die!

Cath. Haste, let us meet our foes; let's see what justice in our cause, what heaven, our courage, conduct, and our troops can do for us. In this our deed of deep necessity, we seek no power unlimited, no arbitrary sway for the brave sons of Russia; 'tis we fight, and when we fail their interest to consult, their happiness to prize, then may they hurl us headlong from that throne where now they seek to fix us;—yes, my beloved people! as I shall make your dear prosperity my first concern, so may the All-righteous lead us on to conquest or destruction!

Omnes. Hurra! to arms! to arms!

[CATHARINE *and Princess* DASHKOFF *descend from the balcony, and mount a light carriage. Prince* POTEMKIN, *perceiving* CATHARINE *has no plume on her head, takes his own from his cap, and presents it to her.*

Pot. 'Permit the most devoted of her Majesty's 'liege subjects, to make his sovereign more con-'spicuous.'

Cath. Thanks to your courtesy, good Ensign, one day we must be more acquainted.

[CATHARINE *fixes the plume on her head.*

Omnes. Hurrah! long live the Empress Catharine—to arms! to arms!

[CATHARINE *and Princess* DASHKOFF *ride through the ranks—loud hurras—the drums beat, the band plays, shouts of "long live* CATHARINE!" *the procession moves out—the scene changes, and the army is seen at a distance.*

SCENE III.—*A Plain—General* MUNICH—*Baron* KORF, *Count* LEOF, IVAN—*surrounded by the Holstein troops.*

Munich. Brave Holsteiners! you know me, know that I have served the state of Russia for thirty years.

1*st Sol.* And how rewarded?

Munich. We will not talk of that, our country is the question. Will you rely upon me, soldiers?

Omnes. For ever and for ever!

Munich. Behold the good descendant of the immortal Peter, now in the last extremity, his faithful subjects all are made acquainted what are the bold designs of his ambitious wife, the throne to exclude him, to immure him in a loathsome dungeon; but my heart sinks within me;—you cannot doubt the sad conclusion of the tragedy—and shall we tamely rest and suffer this? Shall we thus shew our gratitude to ancestors to whom we owe so much? We are six hundred men; but if our souls are fitted for the occasion, we are six thousand strong; courage will serve us in the place of numbers; and in our actions we will prove our might—let's haste to meet them, friends, our standard shall be joined at every turn—and "long live Peter" we shall hear again.

Omnes. Hurrah! Long live Peter! Long live our virtuous Emperor! Hurrah!

Ivan. Pray Heaven our efforts be successful.

Korf. Pray Heaven we come to battle.

Omnes. To arms! to arms! Long live Peter! Long live the Emperor!

Enter Baron STERNBERG, *a paper in his hand.*

Stern. Alas! that cry is out of tune, my friends—this moment I have left the Fortress—Peter is gone—Ismael has persuaded him to put himself in Catharine's power. [*The soldiers lower arms, and a groan ensues.*] Here is a written message to inform us, he hopes to get safe conduct into Holstein, and there reward us.

Ivan. Oh fate perverse! Is there no hope for him? Can we not follow, Korf?

Korf. Alas, my king!

Soldiers. Speak, General—shew us the way.

Enter a Messenger, he approaches MUNICH.

Mes. It grieves me, General, to be the herald of bad tidings; but ye are Peter's friends, and may, perhaps, yet rescue him; a few miles from this place an armed force attacked the carriage of the Czar, and turning from the road of Peterhoff, cried out, "to Ropseha lead him, lead him to prison! to Ropseha, friends! long live the Empress!"

Korf. S'death t'was a concerted plan—so soon betrayed!

Munich. Oh! had I but the traitor Ismael in my power.

Ivan. Let us pursue him, friends, what should we fear?

Korf. Yes, let us pursue; good Munich, we are all prepared; let us confound the traitor Ismael if possible, let us united make one effort more to rescue him from prison, then if we have him 'mongst us,

we may, at least, oblige the dame to make conditions suiting to our Emperor.

Ivan. Ah! let us haste, the strongest guard most like surrounds herself.

Omnes. Aye, let us haste.

Korf. For me, I swear to perish in the field, e'er I will turn my back upon the foe.

Omnes. So we all swear! to arms! to arms!

[*The drums beat, the trumpet sounds, the band plays, the soldiers march—they are heard for some time, and the march is seen at a distance.*

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment at Ropseha—the* CZAR *stretched on a couch asleep.*

Enter Count PANIN—*he contemplates the* CZAR *a moment in silence.*

Pan. Poor soul! he sleeps: 'tis more, I much suspect, than Catharine can. Oh pomp of pride and vanity, how little wert thou made for this estate! What man—what foe would not stop here to apostrophize? Behold me sent to tamper with an Emperor; yes, it may be most grossly to deceive him: an Emperor, than whom two days ago in outward circumstance, none was more great—and now he droops without a friend to raise him.

Czar. [*asleep*] The tide will rise, and rise, and fall again.

Pan. Poor man! 'twill never rise again for thee!

Czar. [*rising*] Who calls?

Pan. I am sent from Catharine.

Czar. And to Peter—what wills your mistress?

Pan. Catharine requests me to inform you, Sire, she will not fail to meet you here, the first occasion that shall offer.

Czar. Oh! she grows too kind, too condescending.

Pan. She adds, unwilling still to doubt your Majesty, she is yet fearful you are not sincere in your professions of acquiescence to her propositions.

Czar. Away, away! can she suspect a man in prison, unarmed, and unattended by a friend?

Pan. Your Majesty has many friends in Russia.

Czar. Did I not set off from Oranembaum without a guard? Have I not every fortress dismantled, in proof I would not carry arms against my wife? Now, Panin, friend, or foe, what better testimony could I give, that my first wish is only for retirement?

Pan. Sire, I believe 'tis not yourself so much the Empress suspects, as those whom well she knows are adverse to her; and as a proof of her sincerity, that with those foes you never will communicate, so to preserve the order of the realm, and to convince her, beyond all doubt, of your intentions, she humbly asks your Majesty to sign this paper.

[*Shewing a paper.*

Czar. What is this paper, then?

Pan. Observe, Sire, I know not if it is, or if it is not, Catharine's intention to make it public: here am I sent charged to present it to you, to say for why

she makes this same request, unknowing I repeat, if what the Empress asserts, be false or true.

Czar. Is the request so very villainous, my Lord, that thus you find it requisite to preface?

Pan. It makes your Majesty confess himself unfit to reign—in fact, unfit for anything, and, therefore, seems too gross e'er to gain credit as your own suggestion, and thence, I argue, Catharine is too politic to publish it.

Czar. That Heaven may have appointed, that this woman shall be supreme in Russia, I do not doubt; and that she is more fitted than myself to tread the thorny path of government, I question not: but when two roads are open to the goal, if from pure wantonness of spirit, she must pursue the evil way, think you that Heaven will fail to judge her for the choice?

Pan. It is to be inferred, Sire.

Czar. Come, let us hear this thing, I do command you! read it fully, without abridgement, or any modest softening of what looks blackest in your eye.

Pan. Sire, you shall have it, as I have it.

Czar. That is our pleasure.

Pan. [*reads*] 'During the short space of my 'absolute reign over the empire of Russia, I became 'sensible that I was not able to support so great a 'burden, and that my abilities were not equal to the 'task of governing so great an empire, either as a 'Sovereign, or in any other capacity. I also fore-'saw the great trouble which must thence have 'arisen, and have been followed with the total ruin

'of the empire, and my own eternal disgrace;
'after seriously reflecting thereon, I declare, without
'constraint, and in the most solemn manner, to the
'Russian empire, and to the whole universe, that I
'for ever renounce the government of the said
'empire, never desiring hereafter to reign therein,
'either as an absolute Sovereign, or in any other
'form of government.'

'*Signed by my hand, the 29th June*, 1762.'

Czar. Ha, ha! Go tell your mistress, if she will add to that, that I was born with asses ears, with every outward sign of inward vice, that thus being born, so on I grew defective, nought differing from the stupid mule, but in the two-legged gait; and being taught, after much tedious toil, and many years of painful tutoring, I was unfit to wear a crown, that now, being so convinced, I humbly do submit myself to those superior creatures, whom Heaven has wisely fitted to be lords o'er all inferior kind; tell her, if this will give me conduct into Holstein, I'll kneel and thank her for the grace so purchased, subjoining with all eagerness my name.

Pan. Sire, I protest most honestly, I cannot answer for the Empress's intentions, yet——

Czar. Oft when the question has arisen of plots, of treasons, and of secret councils, I have dismissed the busy praters of them with this remark, I do all good to every one that lies within the compass of my power—therefore I never fear that any one will seek to injure me: mistaken man! adversity has shewn me there is a principle in human nature which little tallies with this same presumption.

They love to oppress the inoffensive man, who, dignified in office, lets them not feel the weight of his importance, but as an equal lives amongst them, indulgent to their foibles, forgetting their misdeeds, and scorning to revenge when most they wrong him: whilst oft, oh! how perversely strange, they'll bend in fearful reverence to him, who o'er them waves the rod of sterner justice, and oppression. Princes! trust not to your virtues altogether for protection and respect; mine are not great, but they, and not my vices, have betrayed me!

Pan. Sire, I regret, but——

Czar. There is in some base minds a vice which more than others I detest; it is that dirty spirit of revenge, which, when a man has slain his enemy, makes him sit coolly down to mangle his dead body! —such is this paper act.

Pan. To sign or not to sign, rests with your Majesty alone. I seek not to persuade you, Sire, 'tis what, so circumstanced, I would not do.

Czar. Ha, ha, ha!—but to procure a passport into Holstein—let's try, let's see where this deep farce will end. Follow me, Sir; here is no instrument wherewith to finish the affair.

[*Exit* CZAR, *followed by* PANIN.

SCENE V.—*The inside of the Palace;* CATHARINE *seated in a royal chair. The council assembled. Princess* DASHKOFF, ODART, PANIN, RAZUMOFFSKY, NOVGOROD, PASSICK, GLEBOFF, POTEMKIN, ORLOFF, *&c. &c.* CATHARINE *holds some papers.*

Cath. As herein stated, to these our erring subjects let it be speedily proclaimed—to every rebel to our honest cause, to each deluded person who has fought against us—we pitying grant to these permission to retire from Petersburgh, or to enlist themselves beneath our sheltering banners, as many, we presume, will wisely do; for seeing, all must see, not our own valour, or our skill hath won the day, these but for farther grace had inefficient proved; the god of armies went out with us, and we returned victorious! He blessed the great occasion, and spared the blood of our beloved countrymen; never was change so happily effected, we have not lost one soldier in a hundred—of our prosperity this augurs well—for Russia's good let us hope every thing in future! These papers to your care, good Orloff. [ORLOFF *takes the papers.*

Enter hastily ISMAEL.

Ism. Good news, your Majesty, the scattered remnants of the Holstein troops are taken, and hither I have brought the General Munich, guarded; he waits within the Palace, for I presumed your

Majesty might like to see him; he was the foremost in the attempt to free the Emperor at Ropseha.

Cath. 'Tis well done, let him be conducted to our presence. [*Exit* ISMAEL.

Dash. Doubtless it is your Majesty's intention to include the veteran in your clemency?

Cath. The virtue of necessity had never better food for policy.

Re-enter ISMAEL, *Field Marshal* MUNICH, *and Guards.*

Cath. Think not, great General, I have hither called you meanly to triumph o'er a fallen foe—no Sir, 'tis publickly to own we bear no keen resentment in our royal bosom; men who have served their country, as Munich oft has done, should never be forgotten by her friends. Field Marshal, you are free!

Munich. For who shall dare to make me otherwise? Ho, ho, ho!

Cath. This is too much.

Pan. The General speaks, your Majesty, in aggravation of disappointment.

Munich. He speaks as every honest man should speak, who feels his own importance—who feels himself surrounded by a troop who want that nice integrity he makes his proudest boast!

Pass. But why should all this blustering be made? Peter has formally resigned.

Munich. Catharine has published so, what good man will believe it?

Ism. Permit, your Majesty, we lead this miscreant to prison?

Munich. Traitor! whilst yet I have an arm, take care thou do not come within its reach, else it may chance I shall be tempted to revenge on thy base head the imprisonment of Peter.

Nov. This is no place, at least, for your disputes.

Cath. General, we condescend again to tell you you are free—or serve your country, or retire, as fits your inclination; it is our royal pleasure to dispense with your attendance here!

Munich. To serve my country! why yes, 'tis still my country; I may still try to serve her; but when I draw my sword in her defence, how hard will be the task to bury in forgetfulness their vices who command it.

[*Exit* MUNICH *and Guards.*

Cath. All this I must confess is more than I expected.

Pan. Oh! as for him, your Majesty has nothing more to fear.

Odart. Who vents his indignation in resentful speech, seldom preserves his passion for malignant action.

Nov. Your Majesty must now and then expect these same rebuffs,—must take them patiently.

Cath. Oh! most assuredly, they are the most unfit to reign o'er others, who have not so far learnt to rule themselves.

Pan. The bold and honest lion is an open foe, a foe we meet on equal chances, and such a foe is Munich.

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. The Baron Korf, your Majesty, a prisoner, and with him led the young prince Ivan.

Cath. Ivan with Korf? [*Rising with surprise.*

Omnes. Ivan? [*All rising.*

Cath. Did I hear right? how's this? can I believe my senses?

Messenger. It is most true, your Majesty; the Czar brought him from Schusselberg, and now he wears a soldier's uniform; and, if your Majesty will deign to see him, I do believe she'll think all Russia cannot boast an equal youth.

Dash. I do entreat, your Majesty, we see the Prince. [*Earnestly.*

Cath. But what may be your motive, friend?

Dash. Pure female curiosity—it is a sight I never yet have seen.

Cath. I own I have the wish to see him, too, but yet——

Razu. Your Majesty, perhaps, anticipates a second Munich.

Cath. No, good Razumoffsky, a twenty years captivity would tame the ardour of the fiercest spirit—[*to the Messenger*]—conduct the prisoners to our presence.

Nov. Poor youth, to have been released, and then so soon a prisoner made again.

Dash. My heart bleeds for him.

Pass. I long to see how he will bear the interview.

Enter Baron KORF, IVAN, *and Guards.* IVAN *looks around him with composure.*

[*The Princess* DASHKOFF *rises on their entering.* ORLOFF *and* PANIN *also rise.*

Korf. [*to* IVAN] I pray you, Prince, be calm.

Cath. Prince, you are here an unexpected person.

Ivan. Nought could to me, your Majesty, be more unlooked for. How many strange vicissitudes in this life!

Dash. Alas, indeed! or had not Ivan now been here—poor Prince!

[IVAN *looks at the royal chair on which* CATHARINE *is seated.*

Korf. Thanks to your pity.

[*To Princess* DASHKOFF.

Dash. What simple grace! what unaffected dignity! [*To* CATHARINE.

Ivan. [*still looking calmly at the regal chair*] Oh fatal state of greatness! woe that I was born with just pretensions to thee! Oh that my mother had never set upon my brow the sparkling diadem, that in the moment when the States proclaimed me Emperor, she had fled with me to some distant country, where we unknown had lived in obscure liberty, then had I made the comfort of her age, and in her smiles, had been in happiness a king. Oh! hapless, honored father, thou, I know, dost nourish in thy bosom still a thousand hopes for Ivan; paternal love will make the wisest vain, and renders many of the best am-

bitious; yes, at this moment I can read thy soul, e'en now, thou flatterest thyself in secret—one day, thou sayest, or why does he yet live—one day my son shall have again his right, and our long-sufferings shall be all avenged! Oh pitying Heaven! let but my parent dream of the destruction that awaits me, let him believe what he shall see in sleep, so may he prepare himself to bear the evil, so may he not, in the impatience of calamity, grow impious in his grief, and rise to murmur 'gainst All-righteous Providence! [*Princess* DASHKOFF *weeps.*

Cath. Dismiss your fears, my Prince, and be assured it is not our design to play the Empress Elizabeth at Schusselberg.

Ivan. Fears I have none, your Majesty, for minds unused to hope, are never swayed by sickly apprehensions; but simple foresight is the offspring of reflection, and he who is debarred the liberty of action, finds, it is plain, more leisure to exert the privilege of thought.

Cath. Young man, you reason clearly, plainly, simply; we will appoint you masters, that you may study and improve those talents with which high Heaven has gifted you.

Ivan. I thank your Majesty.

Pass. I should be glad to know why you have fought against the Empress?

Ivan. You mistake, Sir; I fought not 'gainst the Empress, but for the Czar. That coward—[*pointing to* ISMAEL]—who can still, it seems, look honest men unblushing in the face, pretended to the Emperor, he would conduct him to your Majesty,

who was most anxious to make terms of peace, but he (the traitor) was resolved, it seems, to disappoint your Majesty's good wishes; and with a treacherous band, who laid in ambush for the occasion, the Czar, instead of meeting with your Majesty, was led a prisoner to Ropseha, we fled to his deliverance—and say, your Majesty, was it not right?

Cath. Young man, we will not question that; at present cares of magnitude engross our thought.

Ivan. Ah! can it be on my account he is detained? Was it his pity for the prisoner hastened his destruction? Oh! lead me to the gloom of Schusselberg again, but oh! release, preserve my gracious Sovereign! His heart, all kindness, and all charity, may err, indeed, yet cannot grossly sin. Did he not every fortress dismantle, to prove he would not carry arms against a wife? Oh! by that dear example—[*kneeling to* CATHARINE]—by the sacred names of husband and of father, let me not plead in vain! by every tie of truth and honor kings should make their proudest boast, by yon unfading and eternal crown that waits the good and merciful, let not your evil councillors prevail, let my life only be the forfeit; perhaps the peace of Russia, your security, may ask that sacrifice; but nobly dare dismiss each selfish fear, your husband in the question—do not! oh do not give consent to murder him. [IVAN *rises, the courtiers look astonished.*

Dash. Amen!

Cath. How's this? what strange delusion seizes on you, youth? I trust, at least, my generous people will respect my feelings, and not betray me

in a cause that sits so near my heart—who dares to raise his hand 'gainst Peter's life is Catharine's deadliest foe—secure to meet all that resentment, injur'd honor, royal hate combined, can meditate against him—enough of this. Count Panin, you I charge with the safe conduct of Prince Ivan hence; to your abode let him be led; and there appoint a trusty guard, that no one may attempt to annoy him—the times are critical, so act with all your wont discretion, waiting our farther orders, and if the Baron Korf do feel disposed, he has permission to attend him thither.

Ivan. [*embracing* KORF] Generous Korf!

Korf. I do sincerely thank your Majesty!

Ivan. The gloom of Schusselberg in thy society were more than courts and palaces without thee.

Korf. Ah! youth of too great promise here to blossom long.

Ivan. [*to* PANIN] Let us haste, my Lord, for my weak optics, unused to scenes like this, already are fatigued with over-exercise.

Pan. Prince, I attend you, pleased and honored, to my residence.

Ivan. I thank your Majesty! [*pressing the hand of* KORF *to his heart*]—but do not part us more.

[*Exit* IVAN, KORF, PANIN, *and Guards.*

Razu. 'Tis somewhat strange, that one who has past his life within a dungeon, should feel so much at home on his first visit to a court.

Odart. [*aside*] And feeling, too, that court by right his own—his native soil.

Cath. I must confess, the perfect calmness of his manner somewhat surprised me.

Dash. The truly dignified in mind, the noble, virtuous, and enlightened being, feels conscious of his own importance every where.

Odart. And he who never has done wrong, should never be ashamed to shew his face.

Cath. 'Tis well observed, withal misfortune often makes the wisest bashful.

Nov. All that composure seemed to me as of a spirit long subdued, that looked beyond this world for its supremacy.

Dash. 'Tis one of Heaven and nature's choicest subjects; I pray our future monarch, our dear Paul Petrovitch, may but resemble him.

Nov. Amen!

Cath. My generous friends, at seven we'll meet again, when I intreat ye to prefer your best requests, for my soul longs to make you some acknowledgment, to shew you I desire your future favour and protection.

Dash. By way of precedent, your Majesty, I will prefer the first.

Cath. I do commend the good example.

[*They all retire.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the House of Princess* DASHKOFF.

Enter PANIN.

Pan. Now for one last essay, and then, perhaps, adieu to hope for ever.

Enter Princess DASHKOFF.

Dash. Welcome, my friend, what news?

Pan. Should Catharine die to-morrow, and Petrovitch cease to exist, would Princess Dashkoff have a voice for Ivan?

Dash. Ah, do not tempt me; full many an hour the fate of that unfortunate has occupied my mind.

Pan. You know that now he is a prisoner in my power, but in an hour——

Dash. He may no more be so—what are your intentions toward the prisoner? let us be prompt.

Pan. Deign but to dictate to your slave, speak but the word.

Dash. What are the Empress's designs?

Pan. Doubtless, to send him instantly to Schusselberg.

Dash. Can Catharine be so cruel?

Pan. Where pity, reason, justice plead, and plead with strongest eloquence.

Dash. Oh! 'tis a subject, too, of matchless promise, that after Catharine's self who were so fit?

Pan. The jealousy of woman, the fears of sovereignty have full excuse in Ivan's merit; but let us dare protect him for the cause of virtue. What shall we do?

Dash. Ah, quick, convey him to some foreign country, where he may taste the sweets of liberty, and hail the generous blessings of instruction; that if some evil chance remove the Empress, should Paul in early life expire, thousands might wish to see this youth in power—all Russia might rejoice to find an heir.

Pan. Oh, as for heirs, should Catharine marry Orloff.

Dash. My Lord! what is it that you would insinuate?

Pan. I spoke too plainly to insinuate.

Dash. Catharine and Orloff! what can all this mean? what vile discordance in the very sound!

Pan. You think, perhaps, you introduced this Orloff at the revolution.

Dash. Most true!

Pan. Ha, ha! Orloff, since that affair of Princess Caroukin, has been the tender confidante of Catharine.

Dash. Oh! 'tis impossible! you are deceived, my Lord! I know that she esteems Count Ponia-

towsky, I know that politics and human nature studying fill every thought and purpose of her soul —it cannot be, you are deceived!

Pan. And who can but admire the address of Catharine, who blinds adoring Russia to her passion for the General, and publicly pretends her heart all constancy to absent Poniatowsky, for all must deem that sentiment platonic; so, with nice art, when she receives a letter from the Pole, she weeps before us all. Oh! 'tis most admirably thought; we see, we comment on these tears, and, in the mean, forget on whom she smiles!

Dash. Ah! can this indeed be true?

Pan. Why all this deep astonishment, my Princess? surely you must have heard, whilst yet grand Duchess, Catharine in vulgar fame but lightly treated——

Dash. But ever I was led to imagine Vorontzoff the fabricator of each calumny, and merely thought her friendship for the Pole, a friendship just like ours, good Count.

Pan. [*apart*] What have I now to hope?

Dash. Oh! but I am indignant with the woman, thus to have been insulted and deceived. Yes, I will reproach her, and teach her, howe'er expedient it may be for monarchs to dissemble, friendship should claim exemption of the foul prerogative.

Pan. Perhaps you have also yet to learn, that she intends to recompence the Princess Dashkoff's services, by giving her a spouse, [*Princess starts*] and then, to shew to all the world, that to the truly noble mind the greatest sacrifice is possible, this

same Count Poniatowsky is the destined bright reward!—so will she prove to Russia, that she respects a husband's death, whom only Russia's good obliged her to dethrone.

Dash. Am I indeed awake? reward me with a spouse!

Pan. Why, 'tis not for a mind like Catharine's to guess that such reward could be unwelcome; and then, where shall we find united such perfections as in the Pole? [*apart*] She hears not.

Dash. This night I promised to prefer a small request.—It shall be so.

Pan. My friend, what shall be done with Ivan?

Dash. Deep policy, to send at distance those whose services no longer are required; and potent friends, by evil chance, may potent foes become.

Pan. Let us forget the Empress—time flies, and hope escapes us in the flight—what shall we do with Ivan?

Dash. Haste, then, do all that justice in your mind shall prompt.

Pan. Draw out for me that nice, that delicate degree of justice—so shall respect for you and virtue make me preserve the line.

Dash. Count, you have chosen an unhappy moment to tax me with the thoughts of this unfortunate,—they are bad counsellors whom injury excites.

Pan. There is a hope for every wretch but me.

Dash. I must forget this woman—good my Lord, do you forget each sordid interest, every selfish feeling. Remove, at all events, this injured

youth—lose not a moment to secure him from the jealous guardianship of Catharine; you know the magic nature of her mind; perhaps e'en now, our thoughts half formed, she has anticipated, and raised a barrier to our unborn plans. Oh! save him, then, my Lord, by any sacrifice; stop not to think, but fly to act; you are a patriot, what can I say more? [*Exit* DASHKOFF.

Pan. Russia, thou future idol of my worship, shall I not prove thee like the mistress I adore, cold, and incapable of every sympathetic feeling? Yet, if thou art but served, Dashkoff would say, what boots it to the patriot, whether his country finds a coffin for the corpse of him who fell a noble victim in her cause, or lets the body rot unshrouded where it fell, for hungry vultures to get fat upon—now for the Prince, to save him if I can—if not for Dashkoff, yet for Russia's sake!

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter CATHARINE *and* ORLOFF.

Orloff. Six regiments, your Majesty, in best array, and four not to complain of.

Cath. 'Tis well; I hear the Princess Dashkoff's voice—retire, good Orloff.

Orloff. Already she is here.

Cath. Then stay one moment after she has entered.

Enter DASHKOFF, *who, on seeing* ORLOFF, *looks indignant.*

Cath. I do rejoice to see the Princess Dashkoff first arrived.

Dash. Hence may your Majesty interpret I am most eager to prefer my poor petition; but now, perhaps, I interrupt this gentleman, and you may————

Cath. I will despatch my business here this moment. Good Orloff, take these papers, see that immediately they be dispersed throughout the city.

[*Giving him papers.*

Orloff. Your Majesty shall be obeyed, and speedily.

[ORLOFF *takes the papers; as he is going out, Princess* DASHKOFF *looks stedfastly after him for some moments without speaking.*

Dash. I must confess the man is not ill made, his eyes are black, his cheek is ruddy, and his teeth look white.

Cath. Doth your request respect our General, then?

Dash. No, no, your Majesty, it towers a little higher.

Cath. So much the happier shall I be to grant it.

Dash. Your Majesty will own, I've been a little useful in your cause.

Cath. Indeed, I feel you cannot ask a due acknowledgement.

Dash. All good my heart desires, your Majesty, is but to be appointed Colonel of the regiment of Preobajensky.

Cath. I cannot understand.

[*Appearing surprised.*

Dash. * 'Name me the Colonel of the regi-'ment, 'tis all I ask.'

Cath. [*apart*] Who gains the army can command the nation.

Dash. Jealous, I see.

Cath. 'The Colonel of the regiment, my friend, 'you are not serious—a place in the academy would 'suit you better.'

Dash. Can there be greater folly to bear the name, than in effect to act the character.

Cath. Ah, that was for an hour; in moments of necessity such things have been, and still may be again; but now that we're at peace, what would it avail? you'll find no precedent for such proceeding.

Dash. Do minds like mine need precedents to act? am I not blest with reason of my own? was strength bestowed upon the mighty oak that it might lean upon its fellow oak?

Cath. That's not the question—'twas well when Russia's glory was at stake, but now, I should be most ashamed to see my friend in man's attire, parading thro' the streets.

Dash. Ashamed! do I hear right? Can it be possible that Catharine's cheek can glow with

* The actual request of the Princess.

shame? She who now seated on the imperial throne of Russia, deigns with complacent smiles to look upon a man, who but the other day was one of fortune's humblest soldiers! Is this a conduct for an Empress? Oh woman! woman! had I sooner known thee, I had not moved a step to set thee on the royal pinnacle—this is an error in my life I may deplore, but never can atone. Oh! how far-famed shall Russia's court be found! E'en now I see the banished vicious of the other courts of Europe, seek refuge 'neath thy canopy, these thou shalt be obliged to welcome, or hear them boldly tell thee to thy face unseemly truths, and when unfriendly faction spreads her fire, and discontents on every side prevail, wilt thou not be obliged to hear thy frailty made the excuse of mutinies? May not good men in reason spurn at thy proceedings? Wilt thou not be indignant to read in this and that recording tale thy private history? and when was't that a Monarch's actions were concealed? when was't, that being great in some respects gave to the mind a privilege unkindly, to descend to sin in others?

Cath. Away, away! and learn to measure better thy discourse to royal ears—and what is't, with the which thou darest reproach me? Who told thee this? What, then, shall I not hold converse with my Statesmen, because, forsooth, envy will tell that which she never heard, and busy slander fancy in the very zephyr's breath an outrage? But e'en suppose it, as thou dost pretend, that I love Orloff; would'st thou for this presume to criminate me? My heart I own is formed for social ties, merit I

estimate, in whatever state I find it, or man or woman; there is of that degree which equalizes all, nor shall the brilliants which encircle Russia's crown, blind me to that which every soul enhances. Orloff has served me with unequalled zeal; his courage I admire! I owe him gratitude! what next may follow in my heart is not for thee to question, me to say; howe'er it be, thou'lt find Catharine, still reigns in Russia, still holds a power supreme to punish the audacity of those, who dare with her contest the right and wrong.

Dash. 'Tis well defended, noble Princess, but for aught I see, I might as well have aided Vorontzoff to mount the throne.

Cath. And not unlike it might be meaner jealousy of her apparently approaching greatness, that caused thee first to move in my support.

Dash. After what is, I cannot be surprised at this; and never, never, was there yet on earth a virtuous action, for which a vicious soul could not find out some deep unworthy motive. 'Twas well observed by Panin in the council.

Cath. If thou hast sworn to all mankind decided enmity, I tell thee thou art free so to conform—I shall not seek to tax thee with a spouse; let that content thee.

Dash. To tax me with a spouse! forsooth, thy better judgment doth forsake thee! Are hearts like mine to be commanded to esteem, or threatened into love? or for state policy shall I be sold? thy shoe, thy glove, is thine, use and abuse them as thou wilt; but learn to know thy subjects better, and better what befits thee!

Cath. Thank Heaven I have no other subjects like thyself.

Dash. No! sooner than I would be made thy tool in such a case, I tell thee truly, for I love the truth, that thou should'st doom me to perpetual exile, in all the horrors of Siberia, or at one stroke possess thee of my head—but hearts are free, and mine is firm and bold!

Cath. If thou hast been informed such were my views, 'tis false; courtiers will lie, and, say, can kings prevent them?

Dash. What, did I seek the burden of a spouse, must I have thy direction in the choice? or are the men of Russia so devoid of grace, that they require to be instructed, that virtue in a wife is seemly? or do they lack discernment, and need the eyes of Catharine to discover where merit has existence? or what is't that our royal mistress thinks?

Cath. I think the man who'd venture to espouse thee, should have a heart of brass, and be encircled in a coat of mail.

Dash. And let me tell thee more; the man thou would'st commend to my regard, would need no other vice to assure my strongest hate, than sharing thy protection. Will this convince thee?

Cath. I am convinced thou art more fitted to excite astonishment, and terror, than to inspire esteem, and admiration.

Dash. Or art thou one of those plebeian souls so prone to self-assimilate, that thou must give to me thy grosser failings, forgetting in the mean, there never yet was found two faces, or two minds alike.

Cath. Like thee, I am assured, none can be found!

Dash. Thou knowest, that e'er my judgment was matured, or I could well appreciate the worth of others, in pure obedience to a father's will, I married. The spouse he chose for me had noble qualities, and soon I learnt to honor him; and having once bestowed in full sincerity my heart, his is that heart to all eternity! Oh 'twas not formed of stuff so vile, that I could give, and take it back, and give it to another; 'tis not for death itself to separate two souls which virtue and approving reason joined in consonance—dead is my lord; yet still his bright remembrance lives within my heart, nor can I doubt that to his thought, I still am ever present; and in that sacred dear assurance here it is, that I support with cheerfulness existence. How could I meet thee, friend, in yon bright realms, polluted with the thoughts of other's love?—but no, it could not be, I could not be admitted to the same degree of happiness hereafter, if I had learnt on earth forgetfulness of thee! Marry again! my soul revolts, and loathes thee for the thought!

Cath. 'Tis time shall prove, and not mere pomp of words, the truth of thy professions.

Dash. Yes, time shall prove, and whilst it stamps on the historic page in lasting characters great Catharine's vices, the name of Dashkoff shall be honored—be unsullied still!

Cath. Away! 'tis not my royal pleasure to hear thee more.

Dash. One admonition for our friendship past,

which never can revive to second life; reflect, I charge thee well, on thy proceedings: consider seriously for what thou art responsible—dare not to let thy failings meet too broadly the public eye—thou know'st how easily a faction's raised, how quickly spreads the plague of discontent, how difficult it is to root the vice that once has spread itself throughout the body politic—faults of such magnitude need a thick veil—then watch, and closely, o'er thy people's happiness; be ever studious of their general improvement—cease not to occupy the multitude with plans of aggrandizement here, and commerce there, so shall they, in the thoughts of universal 'vantage, forget to look at thy obscurer actions, so may'st thou reign securely, and fame and glory spread their halo round thee! take this, the testament of sacred friendship!

[*Exit Princess* DASHKOFF.

Cath. What may all this mean? Why there are subjects now in Russia, which only Catharine's self can calmly view—how easy faction may be raised, she says, and I have fully proved: to spare again the trial of her prowess, I will this moment send an order for her to depart to Moscow. Thank Heaven! no other Dashkoff will be left in Petersburgh.

SCENE III.—*The Library in the Palace*—CATHARINE *seated at a table.*

Enter KATE.

Kate. This moment may it please your Majesty, I have seen Odart, and promptly he'll pursue me here.

Cath. Thou hast been most diligent.

Kate. Now I will hasten to commission Orloff, and as I think the Minister may follow——

Enter ODART *one way, and exit* KATE *another.*

Cath. Odart, I am already half informed that you would speak of Ivan. Is he secure—still Panin's guest?

Odart. And Dashkoff's protegée—the minister breathes nothing but her pleasure—then there's a certain something 'bout this Princess, that let her but suppose a shadow of injustice, without or social tie, or tie of consanguinity, or e'en the dearer bonds of social interest, she sets to work, nor rests till she destroys what in her mind appears the abusive power.

Cath. 'Tis well defined the Princess Dashkoff's character.

Odart. Now should the plot be for the Princess Dashkoff to marry Ivan?

Cath. To marry Ivan? [*Starting.*

Odart. To give the Prince legitimate pretence to usurp your place.

Cath. I'm lost in wonder, can such a thing have risen, indeed, to thought?

Odart. Panin and Dashkoff in close concert—

Cath. But, whilst we speak, quick she departs for Moscow.

Odart. And may return, your Majesty, escorted by the regiment of Preobajensky—e'en now perhaps they march—say, shall I haste, your Majesty, and more inquire?

Cath. Can all this be?

Odart. I trust your Majesty is most assured of my devotion to your cause.

Cath. Odart, I give you credit for your zeal, and trust your secresy, but scarce can I recover my amazement.

Odart. I will be Argus for your Majesty, and hasten with the first intelligence: already round the palace I behold the troops of Dashkoff with the aspiring Ivan at their head.

[*Exit* ODART.

Cath. Marry the Prince! I'm lost in wonder still—two subjects fit for sovereignty indeed! e'en Russia's interest could not suffer here. Can such a measure well-concerted fail to prosper? Marry the Prince! yes, yes, persuade her 'tis for Russia's good, and e'en to take a spouse you might persuade her. Why I am obliged myself to admire the great projection; but, can it be the subtle Odart's own erection? withal so possible. Oh royalty! thou must not nurse the virtues which adorn humanity in humble state—'tis not for thee reposing confidence and calm security in others friendship, no, thou must sleep with thy eyes open, learn cool distrust of all and deep suspicion, for thou must be the tool of others passions, and feel severely when courtiers most pretend devotion to thy cause, they fight for thee but to avenge their private injuries and selfish wrongs. Nothing remains for policy in deep uncertainty but to conform, as if the evil had in truth existence.

Enter a Page.

Page. Count Panin waits, your Majesty.

Cath. Instantly admit him [*Exit Page*]—so, if it be a dream, or stronger fact, alike the mischief is arrested.

Enter Count PANIN.

Pan. I came, your Majesty, to speak——

Cath. Of Ivan, is it not? it was expressly on that subject I sent to give you counsel.

Pan. Your Majesty anticipates me well, [*apart*] and but too promptly.

Cath. It is a talent I'm remarked for.

Pan. Your Majesty has, doubtless, well considered what measures it were best to adopt.

Cath. Oh! in a moment, that was settled in my mind.

[*Approaches a table and writes a note, rings, and enter a Page.*

Pan. [*apart*] Measures so prompt, are seldom marked by mercy.

Cath. 'Tis not for monarchs to delay and hesitate. [*to the Page*] Take this—dispatch it instantly to Orloff. [*Exit Page*] Your guests, [*to* PANIN] my friend, young Ivan and the Baron Korf, must be this night, this very hour, to Schusselberg conducted.

Pan. To Schusselberg, your Majesty!

Cath. Aye, to Schusselberg, so prompt is

always Orloff to execute our orders, that soon as thou shalt reach again thy mansion, thou'lt find the guards assembled, ready to conduct them thither.

Pan. But then a moment think, your Majesty, should any evil chance deprive us of your son, the hope of Russia——

Cath. Go, go, blind politician! Should I not, for the present, secure the youth from a temptation to betray his dearest interest? can I not, whilst in Schusselberg he lodges, reflect what measure's best to be pursued with his regard? think'st thou I'm so bewitched with royalty, that I must hence bear deadly, envious hate 'gainst every one that has a moderate chance of being heir to my possessions? and that because this youth has just pretensions to the regal chair, him I should single out from every other to put aside? Has he not brothers, sisters, too, and, should he fall, do they not heirs become to Russia's throne? What would avail to crop the head, and leave the potent root and the supported branches? away, my Lord, these mean suspicions do me much injustice. I am, Sir, newly risen into power—I have my enemies—yes, some dispute my claim, and some, yet more, resolve I shall not calmly sit upon the height. My honest purpose now with Ivan is but to place a barrier to the idle plans of those, who, for to better, reek their vengeance on my head, might make the Prince the suffering instrument against me, so that his very life might be endangered, and every plan we have in agitation for his advantage, fatally evaded. The times are critical, and

whilst abroad he is allowed to move, all is at stake; again, I cannot answer what a blind zeal for my security might prompt some ardent partizans to do towards him, for you are well assured, my Lord, when revolutions once take place, the change effected, the fever of the public mind does not immediately subside; and for their favourite party then, e'en good men startle not at those same crimes, which, in a tranquil state of politics, they shudder barely to contemplate in the pale records of the past; all is delirium, doubt, uncertainty, and the physician's nicest skill is needed to palliate, prevent, and temporize. The case, my Lord, is urgent—at Schusselberg, I may presume, as hitherto, the Prince will be secure—there, soon as the times permit, procure him every meet instruction; let him be properly attended; let him within the fortress breathe the purer air, and lodge him where the light of Heaven may shine upon him—'tis not my future purpose to punish even crime with darkness; the God who gave us eyes, intended man should upwards look for mercy; the humble mole he doomed to live inhumed, and therefore was the creature taxed with blindness—enough of metaphor, in plainer phrase, this hour the Prince must be to Schusselberg conducted, for that, I well perceive, is most expedient for our mutual safety.

Pan. Herein I see the wisdom of your Majesty, and I will hasten to assure the Prince of your benevolent intentions towards him, else might he too severely feel the seeming harshness of that fate which sends him back to Schusselberg, where he

already has endured, for fifteen years, the darkest horrors of captivity.

Cath. 'Tis well! all haste, my Lord, the troops are on their way. [*Exit* PANIN] So, so, the Princess Dashkoff has performed her promises, and Panin long has lived a captive to her charms, and the despised and jealous Odart, knowing the Count more reverenced than himself, came here to excite my fears to their destruction—truth pierces through the murky cloud—what renders common minds so base as love despised? I am convinced she would not marry Ivan—were that the project in debate Panin, the infatuated Panin! had not come here to plead his rival's cause. [*Exit* CATHARINE.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The outside of the Prison at Schusselberg—Moonlight—Guards at the door of the Prison, the bridge in the back ground*—MIROVITCH *pacing backwards and forwards near the Fortress*—Vlassief *and* Tschekin *come forward with a paper and a light*—MIROVITCH *attends to them unobserved.*

Vlass. [*reading the paper*] "Expect the Prince each moment; the Baron Korf returns with him—they must be lodged in separate cells—let them have lights—our further orders ye shall have to-morrow, one thing herewith you're charged, so need we not repeat; should ever an attempt be made to set the prisoner at liberty, mark how we charge you, as you value life—— [*Reading with a low voice.*

Vlass. and Tsch. Humph! humph! mark that indeed!—"We charge you on the very first appearance of a rupture of this nature"——

[Vlassief *looks about him, and seeing* MIROVITCH, *reads the remainder of the paper to himself,* Tschekin *looks over him with horror.*

Tsch. A pretty charge, forsooth, is this become, I'll have no more on't.

Vlass. Would'st thou be safe, stay where thou art. Kate's a usurper, so she's afraid of every blast of wind; besides, with all state prisoners this

is the charge in Russia, and who will give themselves the trouble now to set at liberty a man who has been left to languish in a prison these twenty years?

Tsch. Alas! poor Ivan!

Vlass. But light and better food it seems are granted.

Tsch. I hear some tumult on the bridge; the prisoners are coming, let us proceed.

[*Exeunt together.*

MIROVITCH *and Soldiers come forward.*

Mirov. So, gentlemen, the prisoner is returning, that I have overheard; hard fate enough an iron heart would own. Oh! would I could effect some change in Russia!

1*st. Sol.* Poor Peter is dispatched already; the change, for aught we know, is sad enough for him, and not much better for poor Ivan.

Mirov. There was something in that letter, friends, which filled the guards with deep astonishment, and the good-natured man looked horror-struck.

2*nd Sol.* That bodes no good.

Mirov. 'Twere no great enterprise to place this youth where Catharine now sits.

1*st Sol.* For, say they, she's not liked too much.

Mirov. Never was revolution brought about so easily as this.

2*nd Sol.* It is encouragement, thou mean'st, to act another, and a better piece.

1st Sol. Why, it cost Russia nothing but a few casks of brandy.

Mirov. And what if this be heavier taxed, let Catharine pay the cost.

2nd Sol. For if she pays not here, she must hereafter.

1st Sol. Hark'ye, Lieutenant, what noise?

Mirov. Heavens! they are already coming.

2nd Sol. So thou mayest see this woman executes before she draws her plans.

1st Sol. And we've a chance of being hanged before we can be tried.

Mirov. They are crossing the bridge—let us retreat, my friends; I've something to propose to you; meet me in half an hour, behind the fortress—this way, this way.

[*Exit hastily,* MIROVITCH *and troop.*

[*The noise of feet is heard, a troop of guards is seen to cross the bridge;* IVAN *and* KORF *guarded, pass with them.*

SCENE II.—*The inside of the Prison at Schusselberg —a Cell lighted.*

Enter IVAN, KORF, *and Guards*—IVAN *looks about him with emotion.*

Ivan. [*throwing his arms round* KORF] Oh Korf! I, then, was taken from this place, but to involve my only friend in my misfortune—there lives no Czar thy age to honor and redress our wrongs.

Korf. Be comforted; e'en yet the time may come.

Ivan. Oh pitying Heaven! If I had any wish for a small portion of what the world considers blessings here, it was alone to give some pleasure to a father's heart, to assure a mother's latter end, some balm of consolation—forgive, All-righteous, if this a fault could be.

Korf. [*kneeling*] O Thou Supreme! whom for near seventy years, I have been essaying, not in vain I trust, to serve, give ear, I pray thee, to the mourner's voice—ward off the wicked purpose of the foe, turn, Thou Omnipotent, the purpose of their hearts, and save from further injury thy servant Ivan.

Guards. Amen!

Korf. So Korf will die contented.

Ivan. Release, All-gracious Providence, my friend, and I can thank thee for my prison still.

Enter more Guards.

Guards. We are commanded to separate the prisoners immediately

Ivan. Oh! for pity leave us but a day together.

Guard. My Prince, we dare not disobey.

Korf. Dear Ivan, we must submit.

Ivan. Oh! that submission to the Almighty's will should now be painful,

Korf. We shall meet again!

Ivan. In Heaven, indeed!

Korf. Farewell, my Prince, my son!

Ivan. My second father.

[*Exit* KORF, *and Guards*—IVAN *follows them to the farthest part of the Cell, and the Scene closes.*

SCENE III.— *An Apartment in the Archbishop of* NOVGOROD's *Palace. The Archbishop of* NOVGOROD, GLEBOFF, PASSICK, TEPLOFF, BULOFF, KRADOCK, *and several others—several armed men in waiting.*

Nov. [*to the armed men*] Secure the outer gate, and watch the southern port, and then send Kradock's troop to wait our orders; we must anticipate our foes, or all is lost. [*Exit armed men.*

Gleb. For who so prompt to dream of danger-plotting as Catharine?

Enter ODART.

Odart. Ye wise, ye crafty, penetrating Gentlemen, who, it appears, but little dream of what the fates are now preparing for you, I haste to warn you of your danger, that, if ye're valiant, ye may the occasion seize, and seek revenge—Catharine, my friends, knowing that Peter's cause you once forsook, has ever looked suspiciously on your proceedings, and want of time, not lack of inclination, has hitherto prevented your arrest:—expect it now each hour.

Nov. How's this?

Odart. You all do know, that I in some occasions have been useful to the State.

Gleb. Most certainly,

Odart. Now see how I'm rewarded [*taking*

out a paper]. 'Within twelve hours,' this paper says, 'depart from Petersburgh; you shall be speedily re-'called,' the artful Catharine adds, of which I credit nought; and then, by way of pure confession that she wrongs me, she here incloses me some precious stones.

Gleb. Food indigestible, after a physic so outrageous.

Nov. Ha, ha! 'tis just as I presumed, here is a double plea for us to act.

Gleb. I'll 'scape the meditated fate, or I no more am Gleboff.

Pass. 'Well says the secretary Brodorf, this 'new-sprung Empress serves her choice friends, as 'we serve oranges, she sucks the juice, and throws 'the rest away.'

Odart. The fool who brought me this, declared it was not I alone on whom the lot was cast.

Pass. Haste, then, evade her purpose—be bold—set Ivan on the throne, and use her proper weapons 'gainst herself.

Gleb. Had Peter's troops once reached the capital, Catharine had never sat upon the throne.

Nov. What honest man would live beneath such rulers? what is this Orloff, whom, perhaps, she means to espouse? what are all those that now surround the throne?

Pass. And what is she that sits upon it?

Gleb. Let us not see the power we've given abused.

Odart. No, 'tis not thus that patriots serve their country.

Pass. Let us this very hour surround the Palace; your regiment, Archbishop, is sufficient; we can proceed without disturbance—'tis dark—the road is safe—we know the path, and may secure this woman in a moment.

Nov. I like the advice.

Pass. That done, we may proclaim an Emperor.

Nov. I am prepared for that, too.

Odart. I vote for Ivan, only!

[*The Archbishop knocks three times at a door in the back ground.*

Enter twelve men bearing standards, on six of the standards are marked in large characters, "*For Justice and for Ivan!*" "*Down with the Usurper!*". *On the others,* "*For Liberty and* PAUL!" "*Down with the Empress!*"

Omnes. Hurra! Hurra!

Nov. Now haste, proclaim yourselves, my friends.

Pass. I vote for Ivan only! what if ye should exalt the nursling Paul, the artful Catharine still would meddle, still contrive to govern.

Odart. And skilful men would still the Court be banished; my vote shall be for Ivan!

Gleb. And mine! and mine!

Pass. Then down with Paul and Catharine!

Omnes. Long live the virtuous Ivan!

[PASSICK *knocks down the standards on which* PAUL *is written.*

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Omnes. Down with the Usurper!

Nov. Nothing so easy as to stir up strife in Russia.

Gleb. And well 'tis known, that drops of brandy in the last revolt, paid and repaid the exertions of the mob.

Nov. Three regiments are in my power, and wait my instant warning.

Pass. And when bold Catharine is secured, we must proceed to Schusselberg.

Gleb. A simple guard of but a hundred men waits at the fortress.

Odart. And but one regiment is stationed in the town.

Nov. I have often heard that Mirovitch, Lieutenant in it, is dissatisfied.

Pass. He would espouse the cause.

Gleb. 'Tis somewhat doubtful, as Catharine artfully pretends the great estates of Mirovitch shall be restored to him.

Odart. The question is to know, whether he hopes upon that subject still, or meditates revenge in deep despair.

Nov. The man's a mystery, forsooth, which nothing can unriddle.

Gleb. But yet by no means wanting to our cause.

Odart. As ye are rich in troops, your best expedient will be to divide.

Nov. True—send the one-half direct to Schusselberg, to set at liberty the Prince; so, whilst we're making Catharine prisoner, our Emperor may

appear amongst us to dignify the cause; the discontent is general—we shall be joined by thousands.

Omnes. Long live the Emperor Ivan!

Gleb. 'Tis half-past nine; at ten, [*looking at his watch*] dame Kate retires—if we begin our work in Petersburgh precisely at eleven——

Pass. Kate will be snugly dreaming of our banishment.

Odart. And the proud lion Orloff will have sheathed his sword, to drink success to Catharine and to Russia! aye, and perhaps subdued by Bacchus' self, the potent gift we may exert against the coxcomb's self, and leave him, like a second Holofernes, in his tent.

Omnes. Hurrah! Long live the valiant Odart!

Enter hastily ISMAEL, *and an immense troop of Guards—whilst the Guards of the Empress are securing the standard bearers of the Bishop,* ODART *draws his sword on* ISMAEL; ISMAEL *draws, they fight. In the mean time a scuffle ensues between the Guards of the Empress, and the Guards of the Bishop.*

Ismael. [*fighting*] Thus thou requit'st the favour of thy Mistress, thou had'st permission to depart in peace.

Odart. And thus thou pay'st thy treachery to an honest man. Die traitor! home to thy heart—this for the Emperor!

[*The Guards interfere, but before they are parted,* ISMAEL *is wounded and falls.*

Ism. Oh, oh! what have I gained, then?

Odart. What thou, 'bove all men in this empire dost deserve, preferment with the Prince of darkness, and positive destruction here! It is as it should be.

Ism. Oh! Oh! [*Dies.*

[*The Guards, after a struggle, seize on* NOVGOROD, GLEBOFF, PASSICK, *and others.*

Omnes. Is there no way to escape?

1*st Guard.* Rely upon the mercy of the Empress.

Pass. Damned be her mercy!

2*nd Guard.* Bear the body away, friends!

[*Some of the Guards remove* ISMAEL.

Gleb. So may thy mistress perish, and all her cursed agents!

1*st Guard.* Better, my friends, submit and ask for mercy.

Pass. Perdition seize her! furies will ever haunt her here, and seize her to destruction in eternity!

Omnes. Amen!

1*st Guard.* Lead out, gentlemen.

Odart. Courage, my friends, she dares not touch a hair upon our heads.

Omnes. [*except* CATHARINE'S *party*] Long live the Emperor Ivan! Down with the usurper! Ivan for ever! Long live the injured Ivan!

[*As they are led out by the Guards.*

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in the Palace*—CATHARINE *and* ORLOFF.

Cath. This insurrection quelled by thy skill so readily, I may hope more security in future.

Orloff. Has your Majesty as yet considered what punishment to inflict upon your prisoners?

Cath. With a choice guard, Odart must be immediately conducted out of the kingdom, according to my first command—to inflict on him a punishment more capital were but to loudly publish every circumstance which policy directs me to conceal; so true 'tis often found, one treason draws another on—the more ye publish of the vice of men, but the more bold they grow in evil.

Orloff. And for the others, they're secure in prison.

Cath. And may remain there, for my second thought. Thou know'st the Princess Dashkoff was recalled, e'er scarce the route to Moscow she beheld.

Orloff. Has then your Majesty been pleased to pardon her?

Cath. Why, for state reasons, it did seem the best; because, forsooth, without that radiance, the minister is like our earth deprived of yon bright beam, a dark, a vapid, cheerless, lifeless form.

Orloff. And I sincerely think all that she said, was the mere effervescence of her rage, when you refused her strange request—the impulse of the moment——

Cath. Aye, and the dread that I should seek to recompense her services by giving her a spouse.

Orloff. According to report, a most unwelcome proposition.

Cath. True, I believe it now; but cannot think the whim will be of long duration.

Orloff. [*smiling*] Humph! There is no place on earth which she abhors so much as Moscow. Has she consented to be reconciled?

Cath. The minister assures me so, and yet, perhaps, he does deceive himself; and hopes, and speaks, and thinks that which he most desires. If it be true, indeed, I shall learn further of these same conspirators, I have already written to inquire if she had any knowledge of them.

Enter KATE IVANOVITCH.

Kate. May it please your Majesty, the Princess Dashkoff is arrived, and waits your pleasure in the library.

Cath. Go send her here, good Kate, the instant.

[*Exit* KATE.

Orloff. I will retire a moment, if it please your Majesty.

Cath. A moment be it then; the intelligence she brings, perhaps, may need your ready notice.

[*Exit* ORLOFF.

Enter Princess DASHKOFF, *holding in her hand a paper.*

Dash. Is this the writing of your Majesty?

[*Giving the paper.*

Cath. Most true, my Princess.

Dash. Indeed! indeed!

Cath. Do, then, the characters seem different to you?

Dash. In truth, that sun of Moscow glared so boldly in my face, my eyes are dimmed, scarce can I see in Petersburgh what passes round me.

Cath. I cannot understand these tropes, my Princess.

Dash. Will, then, your Majesty be pleased to understand plain phrase, and simple truth? I bear no malice in my heart, nor ever stoop to mean revenge; but to forget an insult, or an injury, I want the inclination, and lack as much the power.

Cath. Such feeling who can reprobate? 'tis what I most admire.

Dash. So far we sympathize.

Cath. And not in that alone, I trust.

Dash. Actions determine more than words.

Cath. But of this plot, I wish to speak——

Dash. * 'Madam, to answer that on purpose 'I am come, and, in plain words, I have heard 'nothing: if I had, good care I'd take to whom I 'spoke of it—what is it that your Majesty requires 'of me—to expire upon a scaffold? Woman, behold 'me ready, then, to mount it.'

[*She throws the letter down and exit.*

Cath. The sun of Moscow! never did I feel so fierce its power. Am I an Empress, then, thus to

* The real answer of the Princess.

be braved? not yet secure I sit—but yet—I dare not think—she bears no malice, stoops to no revenge; in sooth, that is a needy consolation. Oh, painful royalty! each diamond that adorns a crown, is pointed with a thorn, that, inward turning, festers in the head of him that wears it;—friend, thou hast none, for none thou darest to have.

[*Exit* CATHARINE.

SCENE V.—*The outside of the Fortress of Schusselberg.* MIROVITCH *pacing backwards and forwards.*

Mirov. My time of guard expires to-morrow—can I, then, proceed? have I not engaged to do it? what? then it is not done, therefore repentance cannot be too late, and what the consequence may be it is not easy to assure—suppose the Prince should, I must advance—here is my troop. [*Enter a party of Soldiers.* Will ye all swear, now, to a man?

1*st Sol.* Before we advance, let us see the order which you say you have received from Petersburgh; else we will not swear, or stir a jot in this business.

Omnes. So we have all determined.

Mirov. Friends, that is reasonable; and as I have the mandate now about me, you shall have instant proof of the authority on which I move; so if we are but bold, we must effect our purpose, and

for the consequence, the glory and the gain alike are ours! here it is.

[*Taking out of his pocket a paper, at which the Soldiers look.*

1*st Sol.* [*reads*] "In the name of the august Senate of Petersburgh, we, the under-written members, do herein enjoin Lieutenant Mirovitch to exert himself to the utmost to release Prince Ivan—to aid him in effecting this, we will meet him with a powerful force on the South of the bridge, on the night of the sixth ult., at eleven; this done, he must proceed immediately to the capital, which will be under arms waiting his approach; for, seeing that Catharine the Usurper is now gone into Livonia, to marry Count Poniatowski, we take this opportunity of excluding her for ever from the throne of Russia, and we swear not to rest until we have placed the imperial crown on the brow of him, to whom it in right belongs, and so Heaven prosper us." (*Signed this day.*)

Mirov. These are men, my friends, the most respectable in the Empire, one of whose sanction would be enough for me to proceed upon.

1*st Sol.* We can have no doubt now.

2*nd Sol.* This woman long has given umbrage.

3*rd Sol.* It is not fit that she should reign.

Mirov. Think of this youth, how hard has been his fate.

1*st Sol.* Once Emperor proclaimed, then twenty years a prisoner.

2*nd Sol.* Heaven looks with pity on his cause at last.

Mirov. Will you now swear with me to set him free—not to recede a step when on the way? as I do now.

[MIROVITCH *draws his sword, and they all draw.*

Omnes. We swear!

Mirov. Swear, at eleven.

Omnes. Eleven, we swear!

Mirov. Now to the bridge, my friends, to leave a message and provide our arms. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Before the prison of Schusselberg—night. As* MIROVITCH *and his troop are advancing,* BEREDNIKOFF, *the Governor, enters and meets them.*

Mirov. 'Sdeath to my hopes! here is the Governor.

Bered. How now, Lieutenant Mirovitch, at the head of his troop at this hour, and in arms.

Mirov. So thou may'st feel!

[*Knocks him down with the butt-end of his gun.*

1*st Sol.* You have done for him.

Mirov. No, no, he is only confounded, but before he can give any alarm, we shall have completed our enterprize: lay him behind that wall, friends. [*Two of the Soldiers bear him off.*

2*nd Sol.* If we should happen to lose the fight, and the Governor gets on his legs again, we shall all be handsomely paid for our trouble.

Mirov. Ye are all sworn.

Omnes. Sworn! sworn! sworn!

[*Exit* MIROVITCH *and Soldiers.*

Enter Baron KORF.

Korf. What can this mean? my guard has left his post; the prison door was open to my touch—alas! I am very faint. Oh, liberty! thou common idol of mankind, too late for me thou spread'st a lure on this side of the grave—scarce will my limbs support me—the vapors of the prison, the fate of Ivan, all conspire to unnerve me; which way can I turn? could I but find the door which leads to Ivan's cell; perhaps—ah, that I dare not hope—all is not well—the cloud bedims the moon, I cannot see which way to turn me. [*moves, feeling*] I hear a noise, I'll try to follow; 'tis strange at this late hour about the fort. [*Exit* KORF.

The Scene changes to the door of IVAN'S *prison.* MIROVITCH *and his troop attack the centinel at the door, who endeavours to repulse them.*

Sol. We did not expect this.

Soldiers. Let us return.

Mirov. Courage, my friends! do not yield, we soon shall overcome them—we are six times their number.

[*The troops of* MIROVITCH *continue some moments fighting the centinel;* MIROVITCH *and his troops are obliged to give back, they*

retreat with their faces towards the enemy, they are heard fighting behind the scenes— MIROVITCH *is heard inspiring them.*

Mirov. Courage, my friends, 'tis all we want.
Soldiers. They fall! they fly!
Omnes. Hurra! hurra!
Mirov. We gain the day—victory!
Omnes. Victory! hurra!

SCENE V.—*The inside of* IVAN'S *Prison*—IVAN *stretched, and asleep.* Vlassief *and* Tschekin *are also reposing—the sound of soft music—first distant, then approaches—a flash of light—a winged Spirit hovers over the couch of* IVAN.

[*Spirit speaks*] "Look up, thou long-afflicted! thou well prepared for yonder blissful realms—thou art no more to live a prisoner; the chain is broken —'tis over! all is over! Thou shalt be happy, Ivan, and be free! Once in this nether world I was a Prince, an exile, and a captive—look on my form and see the glorious change; for thee alike the unfading diadem is wrought—round thy fair brow shall glow celestial halos—for in thy praise, in thy submission here, thy triumph 'midst the holy is complete! I am the highly favoured spirit always sent to virtuous royalty; the final hour, I wait to lead them o'er the vast abyss which separates eternal night, from our unceasing day; no power of darkness can approach whilst I am near; safe in a moment we shall reach the blissful seat; myriads

already chaunt thy welcome home. Ivan the chosen one approaches, welcome, thou long-afflicted! Ivan, be happy, and be free!

[*The Spirit vanishes with soft music.*

Ivan. [*awaking*] 'Tis early, as I think, yet I have slept and dreamt—a gentle cherub seemed to hover round me, and three times called on Ivan—Ivan, be happy and be free! Be free! whilst Catharine lives, can that be possible? or is it that my earthly course is almost now expired? But no! the gentle spirits of the night are pleased to soothe the wretched in their dreams, that all may not be total darkness with them. Ah! [*A noise without.*

[Tschekin *and* Vlassief *suddenly awaking.*

Tsch. What can that be at this late hour?

Vlass. Ah what, indeed? The ending of the chapter now I see—there was some reason for your fears, our heads are both at stake.

Tsch. Aye, the injunction said, should an attempt be made to set the Prince at liberty, we must dispatch him, or our life's the forfeit. Oh! is there not a hole through which to creep?

[*The noise louder.*

Ivan. Dispatch him! Do I hear right, can this be woman's thought?

Tsch. Defend me Heaven! I will not stir in this, so let her take my life. [*Noise louder.*

Mirov. [*speaking without*] Beat down the door, my friends.

Vlass. Fire on them, Guards.

Ivan. Who can this generous being be, who would deliver Ivan?

Vlass. Your life, your life, good Ivan, is demanded.

Ivan. Hast thou no mercy?

Vlass. None will be shewn to me.

[*They begin to beat down the door.*

Ivan. I'll parry then thy blows, and save thee if I can, the crime of murder. So let the sins be on her head alone, whose guilty soul conceived the deadly thought.

[Vlassief *draws his sword, and they contend—* Tschekin *covers his face, and retreats into a corner. The door begins to fall in—*Ivan *wrests the sword from* Vlassief.

Tsch. Pray Heaven they gain an entrance e'er he perish!

[Vlassief *seizes* Tschekin's *sword,* Ivan *wounds* Vlassief *in the arm;* Ivan *is wounded and falls.* Vlassief *binds up his arm which* Ivan *had wounded;* Ivan *groans.*

Vlass. This is proof positive that I have fought for it.

[*The door falls,* Mirovitch *and his troops rush in,* Mirovitch *exclaims as he enters—*

Mirov. Ivan, be happy and be free!

[Mirovitch *starts astonished on seeing* Ivan; *the Soldiers utter a deep groan, and lower arms.*

Ivan. In a few moments, friends, I shall be free! Oh! Oh!

Enter hastily Korf, *trembling as he enters.*

Korf. Oh Heaven! What is't I see? Is this the cause the guard had left my prison? Oh horror! Oh horror!

[Korf *falls on his knee by the side of* Ivan.

Ivan. [*attempting to raise himself*] Kind Heaven! 'tis then permitted me to die in thy paternal arms. Tschekin, thou hast been kind, I thank thee. Generous friends, would Heaven I could have recompensed your zeal! Oh Vlassief! I do forgive. Tschekin farewell—take this request to Catharine, ask her to spare these valiant——no, 'tis vain; haste, save yourselves, and save the generous Korf. Farewell, generous friends.

[IVAN *embracing* KORF.

Korf. Alas, the hand of death already is upon me.

Mirov. [*to the Soldiers*] Save yourselves; I care not for my life, I will remain, and let my forfeit head now pay for all. [*The Soldiers groan.*

Ivan. 'Tis over! All is over! We shall be happy——

Korf. Ivan, and be free!

[KORF *and* IVAN *both fall together.*

Omnes. Amen!

The curtain falls.

FINIS.

MISS BETSY BULL;

OR,

THE JOHNNIES IN SPAIN.

A Melo-Drama, in Three Acts.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT OVIEDO.
DON CALLANDA.
DON SEBASTIAN.
VINCENT, *a child.*
VALENTIA, *a traveller.*
Rodrigo, *an old servant.*
Sandino, *servant to* Callanda.
Lopez, *servant to the* Count.
Fishermen, sailors, dancers, &c.
Frio, *a Gypsey robber.*
1*st* 2*nd and* 3*rd Gypsey man.*

DONNA SEBASTIAN, *wife to* Don Sebastian.
LEONORA, *their daughter.*
MARIANA, *her friend.*
1*st* 2*nd and* 3*rd Gypsey woman.*
Men, women, and children, dancers, &c. &c.

First Scene lies on the south side of Cadiz—view of the Forts Puntal, and Matagorda, which guard the entrance into the Harbour. Several rocks in the distance—the other Scenes are on the borders of Castile, &c.

MISS BETSY BULL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The sea-shore—rocks at a distance—view of a figure on the rock, with a signal; several men, women, and children, on the shore; a boat passes with the Pilot,* Lopez, Sandino, *and Sailors.*

Omnes. HASTE, pilots! haste!

[*Boat moving towards the rock on which is seen the figure.*

Children. Haste, good pilots, haste!

Men and women sing.

Ah! who can tell what fear is,
Ah! who can tell what joy!
Till they know what 'tis to save
The fragile bark from being wreck'd,
To save the sailor, from a wat'ry grave!

Omnes. He faints! he faints! haste, pilots, haste!

[*The figure on the rock appears to droop, the boat reaches the rock, and one man from the*

boat ascends, and returns bearing the shipwrecked person in his arms—a moment's silence ensues, as the man descends from the rock—the boat is seen returning, and the men and women begin to sing as it leaves the rock.

Men and women sing.

Now we hail the happy land!
The sight of all that's dear;
Wives, mothers, children, on the strand,
We hear them! we hear!

Welcome, Pilots! welcome!
Ye guardians, angels, ye,
Who bring us back our kindred,
Oh, welcome! ever welcome be!

Chorus. Welcome, welcome, ye!

[*The boat approaches, and passes the stage, the crowd pursue with loud hurras, and "Welcome ye!" which continue to be heard some moments.*

Enter Pilot, followed by Lopez, *and* Sandino, *who bear in their arms the shipwrecked person; part of the crowd follow in silence.*

Pilot. This way, friends, to my cottage; Roddy shall make him up the best bed in all Spain.

San. And that, with a drop of cordial, will make him as brisk as young Sandino.

[*Exit* Sandino, Lopez, *and Sailors, bearing the person.*

Pilot sings.

Who would not be a pilot?
A pilot bold to save
The lovers, for the ladies waiting,
Waiting for the brave?

Pilot. And now for the drop of cordial.
[*Singing as he goes out.*
A cordial for the brave! [*Exit Pilot.*

[*A group that remain of men, women, and children, dance a Spanish dance; a second group enter, as the others move off, and dance a different dance.* [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The wreck of a vessel is seen, boats surrounding the wreck, some returning to the shore laden.*

Enter Pilot, who takes a basket from a boat by the shore, which he throws over his shoulder, singing.

Pil. Who'll buy my fine fish, who'll buy?
I like to be a fisherman, a fisherman, do I,
For myself, before I send to the market,
I pick what I chuse to fry.
You know, my dear, says my wife,
What we send to the market
People are not obliged to buy;

And who ought to have the first choice
Of all that is good?
Why, my wife, Rodina, and I!

If the nets should want mending,
'Tis Roddy gives the stitch;
If there's nought in the market to fry,
Then I'm sent on the wide sea,
As if I were a witch,
The little fish, and the great ones to spy.
So who, should have the first choice
Of all that is good?
Why, my wife, Rodina, and I!
Who'll buy my fine fish, who'll buy?

[*Exit Pilot.*

SCENE III.—*The inside of the Fisherman's hut.* VALENTIA *stretched and asleep.*

Enter the Fisherman, followed by Sandino. *Fisherman singing.*

Fisherman. I like to be a fisherman.

San. Peace! hast forgotten what lies there?

Fisherman. Why, sure Roddy has made the potion too strong for him.

Val. [*speaking in his sleep*] To thee that future life I now devote.

San. Thanks to my tackle, and my father's boat.

Fisherman. Ha, ha! I see thou'rt thy father's own son, that cannot be silent when there's anything good to be said.

San. Softly, he begins to move.

Val. [*awaking*] My friends, I have slept well—I am quite refreshed.

Fisherman. Aye, did I not tell your honour, that Dame Roddy's cordial, of her own making, was the finest thing in all Spain for composing troubled spirits.

Val. Thank your bounty, generous strangers; I feel I am quite revived by it; I can proceed without delay—I trust I shall soon reach my native place!

San. But, Sir, I have something pleasant to say before you go, and I love, with all my soul, to say a pleasant thing—I am come from my master, Sir, and he wishes to know if there be anything in his house, anything in his purse——

Fisherman. Anything in his heart you are heartily welcome to, as if you were his own son.

San. Hold your tongue, you can't speak at all, father.

Val. But what does your master know of me, friend?

San. Oh, Sir, he knows your whole history.

Fisherman. No! goose-cap, he only knows that the gentleman has had the good fortune to be shipwrecked within sight of old Sandino's boat—that's the way to make a speech.

San. And, Sir, you need no other recommenda-

tion to gain the favour of his excellency, Don Callanda of Talavera, and my master.

Val. Don Callanda of Talavera!

Fisherman. I dare say you have heard of the good man before; every body knows him.

Val. I have heard of him, and I sincerely thank him for his benevolent intentions; but I have saved sufficient from the wreck to enable me to reach my native place, and there I am not poor—take this, my friends, till I can see you again and reward you.

[*Taking from a book a small piece of paper.*

Fisherman. I hope it a'n't money, I can't take any money for saving a sailor, or any other gentleman from the sharks, I shall never catch another fish if I do.

Val. It is a memorandum which will inform you who I am, Callanda will tell you how it may be used, and should you preserve any thing from the wreck, bearing this name upon it, you will keep it: we shall meet again. [*Giving the paper.*

San. That's right, my dear boy, always look to the bright side. You will see my face again, depend upon it. Callanda shall spell all this for me.

[*Taking the paper and putting it in his pocket.*

Val. Do Thou, All-gracious Providence, who hast preserved me from the wreck in which so many of my hapless fellow-creatures have perished; do thou vouchsafe to guide me on, preserve me to the end; let me behold my father's house again! Let me—but kind friends farewell, farewell. You shall hear from me. [*Going.*

Fisherman. Aye do, my dear boy, drop us a line.

San. Farewell, and a pleasant journey to your honor.

Val. Farewell, friends, and peace and prosperity attend you. [*Exit* VALENTIA.

San. The same to your excellency, I wish you the same with all my heart.

[*Fisherman goes to a closet, and takes out a small bottle.*

Fisherman. Here, here, thou hast sent him off with fair words only, and who knows how far the poor fellow may have to travel, whether, indeed, he has got enough to carry him to his own land, or is but too modest to tell us his wants; run after him, and make him pocket this. [*Giving the bottle.*

[Sandino *looking out of the window.*

San. I see him, I'll soon be after him.

Fisherman. Sure the John Bulls have been long enough in Spain to teach thee the use of a private bottle. [*Exit hastily* Sandino.

Fisherman sings.

Bless the ladies great and small!
Long may I be bold to save
Lovers, for the beauties waiting,
Waiting for the brave!

Now the dear angelic creatures
Gathering round us, weep, and pray,
Heaven preserve you! Pilots, hasten;
Winds, and waves and all confounding,
Still we hear them on the way!

Now they shower their blessings on us,
Bless the pretty souls, I say
Nought so sure as earnest prayers
To save us in a stormy day!

Bless the ladies great and small!
Long may I be bold to save,
For the beauties still in waiting
All the faithful! all the brave!

[*Loud knocking at the door, and enter several men, women, and children.*

Men and women. Out with your boat again, Sandino, there are more poor fellows alive in the wreck.

Pilot. Never a doctor in all Spain saves so many lives as my boat—so off we go; lend a hand, friends. Bless the pilots great and small!

Omnes. Bless them all!

[*Exeunt Pilot, men and women following.*

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment.* *Count* OVIEDO *putting on his boots, and admiring his legs as he draws them on.*

Count. Oh! this indigestible pill! would it were the fashion for individuals, as well as princes, to be married by proxy. I certainly have an elegant pair of legs, one of the numerous perfections, I presume that makes me so much admired by the ladies. Never was man so persecuted with the attentions of the other sex, it is quite a fatality

attending me; three times, oh, Oviedo! hast thou been on the very precipice of wedlock! the last was, in truth, a narrow escape; just as the priest pronounced the formidable words "Wilt thou have this woman?" I very courageously took to my heels; the damsel, all sympathy, fled in pursuit of me, but in vain, neither the prayers of the priest, nor the tears of the fair one, could prevail on me to return; and yet here again I am once more, on the high road, and under the existing circumstances, what man so invited, would not summon resolution? Youth, beauty, high rank, and wealth—what man would not? How many at this moment are envying Oviedo! how many shall envy him still more? Happy Oviedo! already tingles in my ear!

Enter CALLANDA, *overhearing the last words.*

Call. [*apart*] Ho, ho, the tune is changed, I find: I have got a most difficult commission—it appears you have some very agreeable speculation, Count?

Oviedo. On the contrary:—but it is time, my dear fellow, I apprise you of the real business which leads me to take this journey.

Call. Very good—I'm all attention.

Oviedo. You are perfectly well acquainted with the all-accomplished Leonora?

Call. The only daughter of Don Sebastian, and, probably, sole heiress to his immense possessions.

Oviedo. Whom I am invited, in the most flattering way, to marry. [*Conceitedly.*

Call. And you, of course, are all eagerness to set off.

Oviedo. [*shrugging up his shoulders*] Why, as to that, I cannot say; it has ever been my fate, on going on such an expedition, to be seized with an invincible inclination to return. Did you not hear of the last affair which befel me?

Call. I do recollect; but the family of Don Sebastian being in question, it is not to be supposed——

Oviedo. Why, as to that, the lady is certainly charming, possessed of every good quality that can possibly adorn the sex; yet it appears to me, that a man is not always master of his actions, and——

Call. Come, come, Count, let me advise you not wantonly to throw away the superior fortune now offered you; how many dukes in Spain would rejoice to be in your situation—you are assured I cannot have any interest in the business, if I plead for the ladies.

Oviedo. You are honored and dignified in the cause.

Call. Is this a match of the father's proposing?

Oviedo. In the first instance, perhaps; but soon as I was introduced to the daughter, she fell passionately in love with me.

Call. What makes you imagine that? How does she betray that deep interest?

Oviedo. She blushes when I address her, sometimes turns pale; she starts, trembles; she cannot answer me a single question; in short——

Call. I should interpret all these symptoms,

proofs of confirmed hatred, horror, aversion, contempt, preference for some other!

Oviedo. Ho, ho, ho! what a novice thou art! horror! contempt! aversion! [*looking at himself*] the man is mad to be sure.

Call. You may laugh, but I am still very incredulous.

Oviedo. Never woman in this world was so enamoured, the dear creature frequently writes me six epistles for one.

Call. She certainly thinks you very much in need of good advice; she has some charitable motive for doing it, she imagines her letters will interest and employ you, that they will keep——

Oviedo. Me from the devil I suppose.

Call. Exactly so.

Oviedo. My dear fellow, I see you know nothing of the human heart, all these things are every-day occurrences with me.

Call. Well, well, be it so then; I recommend you at least, for this once, to take advantage of your good fortune, and, above all things, let us not delay setting off, official business demands my immediate presence in that neighbourhood, and we ought to reach Bianchellino before Don Sebastian.

Oviedo. Such an arrival, I presume, would be expected of the intended spouse of Leonora.

Call. I suppose a priest will accompany the family.

Oviedo. Don't mention it, pray, there is something in that very word which inclines me to decamp.

Call. I shall give my final orders and depart.
[*Exit* CALLANDA.

Oviedo. And I believe I am quite ready to accompany you. I suppose I must go, and myself be witness of the very tears I feel I shall have to occasion. Now where is that honest dog Lopez?
[*Rings.*

Enter Lopez.

Am I ready, Lopez?

Lopez. Yes, my lord, you are, but I am not.

Oviedo. Begone, then, and see that you are prepared in three minutes.

Lopez. Five, please your Lordship. [*Going.*

Oviedo. And hear me, charge my best pistols, and take another pair under your own care.

Lopez. What, are we going to be robbed or murdered, my Lord?

Oviedo. Going to the devil; make haste, I say.

Lopez. There needs be no such hurry-scurry in going there, methinks. [*Exit hastily* Lopez.

Oviedo. There goes an original, who scarcely knows if his head stands on his shoulders or his haunches, and yet, I presume, can occasionally correct me. But let me consider, what else shall I require? Oh! my case of cordials, that will be above all things necessary. Poor Leonora! thou little dreamest of the disappointment about to await thee! Poor girl, poor girl! Upon my soul I cannot help pitying her.

Re-enter Lopez.

Lopez. All ready, my Lord, I have tied up my portmanteau.

Oviedo. That's right, I like dispatch. [*Exit* Lopez] Poor Leonora! [*Exit Count* OVIEDO.

SCENE V.—*An Apartment.*—*Don* SEBASTIAN, *Donna* SEBASTIAN.

Don. Seb. Madam, madam, I will not hear any more of the Count's eccentricities—according to the common understanding, every one who possesses any superiority must be eccentric. But I do not wish my daughter to marry any of your common-place characters, and let me tell you, he who dares not to deviate from the track beaten by the vulgar, can have no pretension to merit, can never gain any distinction.

Donna Seb. But is it not an objection which ought to supersede all others, that Leonora dislikes him above all the world?

Don Seb. Dislikes him! pshaw! it is quite impossible; is he not young, handsome, elegant, accomplished, witty, of high rank? in short the very man whom all women particularly admire?

Donna Seb. All vain and frivolous women, perhaps.

Don Seb. Besides, I am in some degree indifferent as to whether she likes him or not; I am not at all afraid of their future happiness.

Donna Seb. Alas, alas! I see I am likely to be deprived of both my children!

Don Seb. Madam, you know my determination is to marry Leonora immediately; how should I answer to myself should some ignoble villain tear her from my arms, and with Leonora's fortune, independent of her beauty, a misfortune so overwhelming is to be feared. Chance, an accident, fatality, call it what you will, has deprived me of one child, it shall be my especial care to prevent any thing of a similar nature bereaving me of the other.

Donna Seb. I am satisfied there is no hope.

Don Seb. No, indeed, there is no hope; you cannot now unite your daughter to the son of the exiled Alvarez, since they are both at peace in the same grave.

Donna Seb. And now that they can no longer offend you with their misfortunes, you will perhaps allow that the father's fame was most honorably cleared of every aspersion.

Don Seb. No, I cannot allow that; for in my mind, the fame that has once been blistered, always retains a scar.

Donna Seb. You are too cruel.

Don Seb. Prepare my daughter for the Count's arrival; I expect he will use all diligence to meet us at my villa; perhaps we may all arrive at the same instant. In the mean time I shall order a strong guard, for we have a very dangerous road to pass.

Donna Seb. Oh Leonora! how hard is your fate. [*Exit Donna* SEBASTIAN.

Don Seb. How silly are those women! how diligently do they always persuade themselves that happiness is quite independent of all circumstantial aid, of all the gifts of fortune; this comes of reading French romances, and tales of knight-errantry—howbeit I shall not rest till I have put all these sickly fancies out of my daughter's head, and that by uniting two of the noblest and most ancient families in Spain. [*Exit Don* SEBASTIAN.

SCENE VI.—*The entrance into a Wood;* LEONORA *disguised as a Student of Salamanca*—MARIANA.

Leon. It is for you, dear Mariana, the painful task, to apprise my mother of my final determination, and of the route I have taken—to bid her farewell—perhaps an eternal farewell—no, I cannot—I know my heart, my resolution would fail me. Soothe, then, her anxiety, assure her of my safety, persuade her, as I hope reason may return to my father, that we may soon meet again!

Mar. But dear Leonora, can you really confide in the Abbess? May she not inform your father of your retreat?

Leon. Sooner, I am convinced, she would allow me to take the veil.

Mar. Ah! beware of that! Remember you cannot be Oviedo's wife, though dragged to the very foot of the altar. You could even there claim the protection of the priest, and appeal against the cruelty and injustice of the proceeding.

Leon. Ah! but to proceed so far, to be obliged to be arrayed in bridal pomp, to see Oviedo at my side, to approach the altar, to be so near the brink of what I consider all moral destruction; I shudder at the bare perspective! I feel I might be tempted to some fatal purpose; it is to avoid the temptation that I fly, my senses bewildered at the moment, might lead me to question which were the greater crime!

Mar. I promise, and will keep my word. But were I you, I would write the Count a letter before I went away; tell him that you hate him with all your heart and soul, and beg him to remain just where he is, and then if that experiment fail, you would still have the Convent of La Guarda.

Leon. And where should I be if the letter were never to reach him, and if he were to persist, even after receiving it? No, no, my determination cannot be shaken. Ha! what noise is that?

Mar. [*looking out*] Be composed, it is old Rodrigo—you can fully depend upon his integrity?

Leon. As on my own; my foster-father, who, perhaps, may offend Heaven by his idolatry of me.

Mar. But I fear his age, and the banditti which infest the roads. All Spain is in commotion, notwithstanding the many Johnnies who are come to our assistance; indeed I am not without fear of your being attacked by some of their hovering companies, you might be taken for some spy in disguise.

Leon. I fear nothing but to be wedded to one I hate, whilst I consider myself in honor and reason, the wife, the widow of another. I promised,

sacredly promised you, Alfonso, never, never to marry another, and though you cease to exist, I do not live to forget.

Enter Rodrigo, *equipped for travelling.*

Rod. An' please my young master, all is ready, and the sooner we depart the better. My wife is to drown me to-night in the river, and, I suppose, my body is not to be found, nor allowed Christian burial, now if I should happen to die twice on the same night, it will be an odd story.

Leon. Courage, my good friend, Heaven will preserve the faithful!

Mar. Dear Rodrigo, I have a thousand fears, are you well acquainted with the roads, and with the parts which the Banditti most infest?

Rod. The lady banditte, I think, will be the most ready to attack us, I and my young master will, I doubt not, make sad havoc in their hearts.

Leon. Ah, what do you think of that, Mariana?

Mar. I do think the dress is mighty becoming, and that there is some reason for Rodrigo's apprehensions.

Leon. Farewell—console my mother—I still hope much from Don Callanda's efforts with the Count.

Mar. And he knows the united wishes of three poor disconsolate women!

Rod. It almost makes me cry, and yet I had a fine dream last night.

Mar. Stop, Rodrigo, one word of advice to you —be sure you do not enter into any contention with the John Bulls, if you should meet any; always endeavour to make friends of them, Rodrigo, for you must have heard what wonderful creatures these Johnnies are.

Rod. Ah, yes, indeed! I have heard my great grand-dame say, that there was one Miss Betsy Bull, that blew up the grandest fleet that ever Spain sent forth—A woman! so what may be expected from the master Johnnies?

Leon. Let us haste, Rodrigo, [*looking out*] the very breeze that agitates the leaves, alarms my fears, I mistake every sound for the approach of footsteps —farewell! [*Embracing* MARIANA.

Mar. And may good angels guard you!

Rod. Farewell to my wife; alack-a-day, the mules are at this corner.

[*Exit* LEONORA *and* Rodrigo.

Mar. To-morrow morning, Don Sebastian will learn he has lost his daughter; we must make him sleep as late as we can, otherwise she will be pursued to the very gates of the convent. Well, I do hope that Leonora may meet with some charming knight-errant on the way, who may make her repent of her vows of eternal celibacy. It is all very well to hate the Count Oviedo, but then not to like any body else in this world, is what I do not understand, and what I am sure I do not wish to learn; heigh ho! I still seem to expect some comical adventure, some gallant knight will be attacking or defending the young student—the whole story will

be discovered, and then it follows, as a matter of course, that Leonora becomes interested in her preserver, and I shall not be surprised if she should be married the day after myself; and yet she is in a strange contrary mind at present. [*Sings.*

A lady there was lost her lover,
I hope that will ne'er be my fate,
For, perhaps, I might not find another,
All the world knows the chances are great!

This was not the case with this lady,
Away from them all she would go,
And from one, too, a handsome young lord,
Why, I don't think that I could do so.

'Tis a fine thing, indeed, to be constant,
But when a man dies, it is plain,
If you hear the soft tale of another,
He cannot come back to complain.

[*Exit* MARIANA.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Forest Scene, moonlight.* VALENTIA *sleeping under a tree.*

Enter Frio, *a gypsey man.*

Frio. Bad luck! no game all night—nought but a capon all day; I shall make a sorry appearance amongst the company.

Val. [*sighing*] [Frio *starts.*

Frio. Ha, mercy! what can that be?

Val. Oh! I have slept most soundly; [*awaking*] but how I could so far have lost my way, and been here benighted, I know not; it would seem a perverse interruption—a day, an hour's delay, in the scale of destiny; how important, how fatal may they be! but shall I complain? preserved through so many dangers; reposing confidence should be my staff.

Frio. [*advances towards him*] I think you say, Sir, you have slept very soundly; I am very glad to hear it, Sir, and now I recommend you to pay for your lodging: [VALENTIA *looking surprised*] you would not go away, like a sorry dog, in debt—your money instantly, young man!

Val. I carry very little of that about me.

Frio. It is certain, however, that people cannot travel about in this world without it, and you, Sir, I am well assured have lost your way, or you would not be reposing in this particular spot—your mule, I suppose, has been stolen, too, for there is not one to be seen near you; but out with your money, I cannot wait, time flies.

Val. If you are in distress, and half of the little I possess will content you——

Frio. No, Sir! no halvings, I have got nothing all day—your money, instantly!

Val. No! then a wretch induced by necessity only would never be so far rapacious; [*apart*] if I lose this, I am again shipwrecked.

Frio. If you will not give, I must take.

[Frio *begins to wrestle with* VALENTIA; Frio, *in the struggle, falls, and* VALENTIA *makes his escape.* Frio, *quickly rising, pursues* VALENTIA—*the report of pistols is heard, and a groan succeeds.*

SCENE II.—*A Gypsey's Hovel represents a Cave. Cliff rising perpendicularly above the group; several men, women, and children, seated round a fire, some eating, some drinking, some singing.*

1*st Man.*

Come fill the sparkling glass again,
'Tis night, and pleasure's festive reign!
Each man's a subject, each a king!

Chorus.

Oh, the merry merry lives of gypsies sing!

2nd Man.

Peace! there are horses trampling near,
Conceal your lights, 'tis wise to fear!

[*They cover the fire; a silence of a few moments—the wind, and the rustling of leaves, is heard.*

1st Woman.

Your fears are fools! 'tis but the rain
That beats upon the thirsty plain,
And with the dead leaf strews the ground;
What music's in the rustling sound!
Oh! I could ever, ever listen!

3rd Man.

Silence, all! a foot is nigh,
Silence, till it passes by.

[*Silence of a few minutes, a man and a woman are seen to walk fearfully along the top of the cliff.*

3rd Woman.

Such is your ever boasted joy.

2nd Man.

Good wife, what state's without alloy?

3rd Woman.

Tho' you scorn your country's laws,
And sing of bolder freedom's cause,
Slaves, you live, to servile fear,
The breath of day is danger here!

1*st Man.*

Well, I am king! and my decree
Is this, that all who dare to rail at me
And my good laws, shall banished be!

Omnes. Bravo!

1*st Man.*

I'll have no scorpions in the state,
To sting the good, and bite the great;
I say I'm king! and king I'll be,
The world is wide, and you are free!

Omnes.

Oh! 'tis a happy thing to be,
Like the merry merry gypsies, free!

1*st Man.*

So, chuse your path, nor dare again
To bring into contempt our reign;
Such rebel spirits shall not share
With better men my royal care;
Enough of mercy 'tis I shew,
To give you freely leave to go.
More were pernicious; doctors all agree
That summer suns may pestilence increase:
Who crops the evil in its birth, may hope to find it cease!

Chorus.

"Long live our noble king!"
Oh! 'tis a happy state to be,
Like the merry merry gypsies, free!

3*rd Woman.*

Sure, one might speak without so much ado,
I'm as content as other folks, I trow!

1*st Woman.*

Away with discord, cheer the night,
Where's Castel, Blanco, Frio, Sprite?

2*nd Man.*

We'll drink to Frio.

1*st Man.*

Here's to Frio—he is brave!

Omnes. To Frio, all.

1*st Woman.*

But t'other day a cheese he brought
Large as my head, with maggots fraught!

2*nd Woman.*

Aye, that is truth, thou hast well said,
'Twas filled with maggots, like thy crazy head!

1*st Man.*

Thou ever wert, old Peg, a witty lass,
Here's to thy cheese, and thee, another glass!

3*rd Man.*

Oh! 'tis a happy thing to be,
Like the merry merry gypsies, free!

[*A report of pistols is heard.*

Enter hastily VALENTIA, *pursued by* Frio.

Frio. Seize on him, gentlemen, he would have taken my life.

[*As they are rising to seize on* VALENTIA, *a great noise of firing approaches, on which they all take flight, one child excepted, who is sleeping on the ground.*

Val. 'Sdeath, where am I? Ha, 'tis a gypsey's

hovel! which way shall I turn? [*looks about and starts*] Merciful Providence, what do I see? here is a child left behind them in their haste; perhaps, too, the child of some despairing mother—what can it be? [*approaches it*] Can it be indeed possible? do I dream? is it a delusive resemblance? No, no, no! it is, it is he! [*taking the child in his arms*] Be calm, my heart! sleep on, blest innocent. Do Thou, All-guiding Providence! do Thou direct me to the path of safety—preserve me, oh! preserve me this night from every farther danger! See, it is not for myself that I ask for thy protection; look on this helpless, this unoffending, this precious charge!

[*Exit hastily* VALENTIA, *carrying the child.*

Soldiers on a distant mountain seen passing.

Re-enter a Man and a Woman belonging to the Gypsies, they look fearfully about them.

3*rd Woman.* What can have become of the child? he was sleeping here.

Man. Most like he followed us, and is now in the crowd.

3*rd Woman.* If I should quit your honorable company, 'tis my determination to take him with me, if I can find him.

[*A distant cannonading is heard.*

Man. We had best make our escape.

3*rd Woman.* Thou need'st not fear, 'tis nothing but the Johnnies fighting with one another about their sweethearts; my opinion of them is, that they like to fight each other as well as their enemies.

Man. I have picked up all that I see worth taking, so I'm off.

3*rd Woman.* Ah, ha! dost see—that is something like the lad that fought with Frio, and, if I mistake not, he has the boy in his arms.

[VALENTIA *seen in the distance on a mountain.*

Man. I dare say he is one of the Bulls, for he seems to be going towards the soldiers.

[*Noise of arms louder.*

3*rd Woman.* Then, sooth, I will not follow him there.

Man. I'll be content to save myself, and, if thou'rt wise, thou'lt do the same; thou hast heard of Miss Betsy Bull. [*Noise louder.*

3*rd Woman.* In truth, I think she is coming again.

[*Exit hastily Gypsies, Man carrying basket.*

SCENE III.—*A Forest Scene, mountains, &c.*

Enter VALENTIA, *leading* VINCENT, *moonlight.*

Val. Come, come, do not tremble, sweet innocent! [*child looks fearfully about*] We have escaped them, they will not pursue us farther; if they do, we must fly to the English.

Vin. And who are the English?

Val. The friends of humanity! the friends of every nation in distress! and now fighting for us.

Vin. Ah! let us fly to them, then. [*Going.*

Val. But this way, I suspect, will lead us home; yonder some of the English are encamped—banish all fear—I will restore you to the arms of your mother.

Vin. Will you indeed, and indeed? then you are a true friend, and I have often, very often said my prayers to find such a friend, and now kind Heaven has heard me!

Val. His ears are always open to the prayers of the good.

Vin. Look out there—are those the brave English? [*Soldiers seen on a distant mountain.*

Val. Yes, that way lies the English encampment; let us proceed.

Vin. And are you very sure I shall not be lost again?

Val. Will not that kind Providence that directed me to find you, still protect us on the way?

Vin. Oh, yes! he will, he will! and I will pray again and again, that he may preserve your life, and that you may see my dear mama; but, perhaps, she is dead, sometimes I have dreamt so, and then I wished I was dead, too, my heart was so sad!

Val. Fear nothing, my good child; I dare believe she still lives.

Vin. And when I tell her a friend saved me, what must I say if she asks his name.

Val. A friend without a name is often the best of friends.

Vin. Ah! but she will not be pleased with me if I cannot tell her yours.

Val. My name is Valentia.

Vin. Dear, kind Valentia! [*the report of arms at a distance*] that noise does not make me tremble now; I have heard of guardian angels, and I believe that you are one. [*Embracing him.*

Val. Sweet cherub! Heaven will watch over us; we will climb that mountain, and on the other side we shall find an inn. [*Noise louder.*

Vin. And if the gypsies come after us, we will fire upon them and frighten them away.

[*Exit* VALENTIA, *leading* VINCENT, *they ascend a mountain.*

SCENE IV.—*A Forest, and Mountains in the distance—Moonlight.*

Enter Rodrigo *leading two Mules, which he fastens to a tree,*—LEONORA *seating herself.*

Leon. Oh Rodrigo! I faint with this quick travelling; I wish I had taken your advice and stopped at the last inn—the dread of being pursued has made me proceed too far.

Rod. Aye, but my dear master, they would never think of pursuing this road, and nobody could know either you or I—but do lean against that tree, try to take a little nap.

Leon. I am already overpowered with sleep.

Rod. I will keep watch at this corner, and the mules may browse a little at that.

Leon. Do you think we are safe here?

[*She leans against a tree.*

Rod. Ah! dear me, there is no protection like poverty, and travelling like two poor fellows as we are, I trust we shall not be disturbed. [LEONORA *falls asleep*] Ah! that's right, go to sleep, that's a dear boy; for my own part, now I am all alone, I can hardly help crying. What will become of me if any misfortune should befal him?—[*looking out cautiously*] —and at the best I know not how I must return to this world, that is what has never been once thought of; my wife must be a widow, or, for anything I know, my boat, and my wife, and my cot may fall to the lot of some of the Johnnies, who are now swarming in Spain; and for me to attempt to fight them, after the story that I learnt from my grandame Miss Betsy Bull, I cannot do it, and, therefore, I cannot help crying, I cannot!

[VALENTIA *is seen descending a mountain with* VINCENT *in his arms; some persons appear to pursue him; the flash of a pistol, the fire reaches* VALENTIA; *he arrives at the foot of the mountain and sits down; he binds his arm.* Rodrigo *on perceiving him, puts himself in an attitude of defence, and takes out a pistol;* VALENTIA *groans slightly,* Rodrigo *returns the groan.*

Vin. Dear Valentia, you will not die.

Val. No, no, fear nothing, it is but a scratch.

Rod. I am sure he is a gentleman, I am not frightened now, he speaks like a good man.

Val. What have we here? a traveller, and asleep too, apparently a student of Salamanca; and who are you, my friend?

Rod. Sir, I beg your honor's pardon, but that is my mistr— master; we have travelled rather too far without resting, he's a very delicate youth, and being very eager to reach the end of his journey, has come too many miles at a stretch. Pray take care not to disturb him, Sir.

Val. Oh! not for the world.

Vin. We will help to guard you.

Leon. [*speaking in her sleep*] Could you at this moment read my heart, this faithful heart!

Val. [*starts in amazement, and unconsciously grasps the arm of* Rodrigo] What is that? From whence did that voice proceed?

Rod. Oh! lud, lud! Sir, don't be frightened, it is only my young master, he often talks in his sleep, no robbers here just now, I'll keep watch.

Vin. Dear Valentia, I fear your arm is very painful.

Val. My brain's bewildered! that fever has not yet left me; let me listen again, I deceive myself.

Rod. You do, my dear fellow, we are all angels about you.

Leon. Tell him all that I have suffered, tell him.

Val. Where am I? Do my senses forsake me? I tremble! Am I really in existence, on earth?

[*Beating his forehead.*

Vin. Good old man! what shall we do? he is very ill.

Leon. [*waking*] Oh! Rodrigo, what noise was that?

Rod. Nothing, nothing! my good master! all

friends about us; two gentlemen, travellers exactly like ourselves, and they will help us to fight.

Vin. That we will, indeed, Sir, don't be afraid.

Val. This wound maddens me! Oh! torture inexpressible! but I must be——

Leon. Alas, I hope we shall arrive soon.

Vin. This gentleman has saved my life, and I am sure he will fight for you. [*Approaching* LEONORA.

Leon. [*rising*] You! who are you, sweet cherub? Oh! what do I see? What is your name? quickly tell me.

Vin. Vincent Sebastiano; I was stolen by the gypsies, and it is he, that good gentleman, who has saved me, and who is taking me home to my dear mother, my father, and my sister.

Leon. It is, it is himself! my long lost brother! [*Embracing him.*

Rod. Oh! dear, dear! we shall all be found out, I cannot help crying!

Vin. What, and have I a brother? how is this? say, Valentia?

Val. Oh! strange fate! wonder-working Providence! [*apart*] Be calm my heart!

Leon. What have I said?

Rod. All friends—take courage.

Vin. Tell me, good old man! how is this? I never knew I had a brother. I had a sister, and I think, indeed, I think this gentleman must be Leonora, she calls me brother, and speaks so sweetly. Oh! I do remember you! [*Throwing his arms round her neck.*

Rod. Oh! lud, lud! we are all discovered!

Val. Rapturous moment!

Leon. Oh Rodrigo! I am lost for ever! One of the most seemingly fortunate events, has perversely ruined, perhaps, all my projects.

Vin. Dear sister, be not afraid, tell me, shall I see my dear dear mother very soon, is she near us? or are we still very far from home?

[LEONORA *retiring in confusion.*

Leon. Alas! I cannot speak!

Rod. Do not say any more at present, my dear boy. [*Speaking softly to* VALENTIA.

Vin. [*to* VALENTIA] Tell Leonora you will take care of her as well as me, speak to her kindly, she seems afraid.

Val. Surprise has made me silent. [*approaching* LEONORA] Can you, then, fear to be betrayed by the guardian, the deliverer of that child? Would he who has risked his life to save the brother, not shed the last drop of his blood to preserve the sister from every danger? wounded, suffering, and in affliction, my heart, my arm, shall be strong to protect you from all approach of evil.

Rod. Ah! my dear mistress, I am sure we are all friends well met, and Don Wollentia will help us to the end of our journey.

Val. To the most remote corner of the earth, if that were your destination!

[VINCENT *takes hold of* LEONORA'S *cloak, appearing to draw her towards* VALENTIA.

Leon. Generous stranger! I know not how to thank you; I cannot, no, I cannot!

Val. Your secret is safe with me, as in the

bosom of the ocean—could he be man that could betray you at such an hour.

Leon. Ah! but to be called upon to place a confidence in one to whom I am a total stranger, who is equally unknown to me; how can I reconcile all this? Alfonso, what would you say? Is it not an offence, an injury to your esteem? and tho', indeed, you cease to exist——

Val. Cease to exist! What do I hear?

[*Agitated.*

Leon. Stranger! my tale is short! I am acquainted with the Abbess of the Convent of La Guarda; I fly to her for shelter and protection—this old man, my foster-father, attends me on the way, and my disguise is intended as a second protection.

Rod. Yes, this is all true, as I hope to see my wife again.

Vin. Don't cry, good old man.

Rod. My dear boy, I cry for joy, to think you are found again, and that we have another guard for our travels.

Val. But from what tyranny, what oppression do you fly? [*apart*] Oh! I am very ill.

Leon. Can I, indeed, go on?

Val. Some urgent cause there must be.

Leon. Alas, Sir! it is not, perhaps, for you to judge my heart—you, perhaps, cannot guess the tortures of a mind under such circumstances. It is my misfortune—misfortune, did I say? no! my pride, my glory to have been betrothed to one

whom every sentiment of honor, reason, and religion have taught me to reverence and esteem—whose adversity endeared him doubly to me, whose injuries I have felt as my own; whose respect I valued next to Heaven—whose death I mourn eternally!

Val. His death! indeed, this is too much!

[*Appearing very much agitated.*

Leon. But my story distresses you——

Val. May I intreat you to proceed.

Leon. My father, I spare him; I fly to avoid his will—an odious marriage with the Count Oviedo!

[Rodrigo *and* VINCENT *talk apart.*

Val. Oh! 'tis madness! 'tis—pardon me, but indeed I feel your misfortunes—I do severely feel them.

Leon. You said you were in affliction; yet I am sorry if my tale should revive your griefs—but be composed, you see I am comparatively calm; the thought of having escaped this, as I trust, this last calamity, has given to my very grief a new character—has sanctified my sorrow—has made me look forward to my retreat in the Convent of La Guarda, as to a temporary rest on the road to Heaven.

Val. Blessed escape! I dare believe you will reach unmolested to that happy shelter—fear nothing.

Leon. But, should farther persecution pursue me, I have still one resource;—I can take the veil.

Val. [*starts*] Ah! beware of that! but now it is time we seek some other shelter—this child must soon require rest—we must cross the mountain.

Vin. Now, dear brother, fear nothing, we will all fight for you.

Leon. Heaven will guard your inocence!

Rod. I believe I shall see my wife again, I cannot help crying.

Val. Lean on my arm; that All-seeing Providence who watches unceasingly over the virtuous, will spread his sacred Ægis round you, no danger shall approach you. [LEONORA *takes his arm.*

Rod. Now must I see after the mules.

Leon. Forgive, Alfonso, if I take the protection of a stranger to aid me to preserve my life, to devote it eternally to you! [*Going.*

Val. To be the protector of the injured! of celestial innocence! oh, moment that repays me for a world of suffering!

Leon. Oh, Alfonso! were you but alive and here now.

Val. Was he not the son of the noble and greatly-injured lord Alvarez?

Leon. It is true! but spare me farther!

Rod. Now, my dear friends, the mules are ready there; come, my brave boy.

[*Taking* VINCENT *by the hand.*

Vin. Take courage, sister; brother, I mean.

Val. The sky is clouded, but the storm will soon pass. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Forest Scene. A shattered Cottage,* VALENTIA *seated against the door*—Rodrigo *near him, Mules, &c.—a storm; the thunder is heard, and the lightning succeeds.*

Rod. Oh, dear me! I cannot help crying; to be sure, if we had not missed our way, we should not have been overtaken by the storm.

Val. Courage, my good Rodrigo, this will not last more than two minutes; I am so well acquainted with the seasons, I can foretell with ease fine weather or the contrary; thank kind fate, our youthful travellers are completely sheltered.

Rod. Ah! indeed I am thankful, and sure, there would not have been any harm if we had been inside also. [*a loud report of pistols is heard, and voices*] Oh! lud, lud! so we are only getting rid of one thunder, to be beset with another.

Val. There may be noise without danger—all Spain is in commotion.

A voice without. This way, friends, I am persuaded the villain fled into this covert.

[VALENTIA *rises hastily, and takes his pistols.*

Rod. [*speaking through a crevice into the cot*] Keep still, my dear boys, it is nothing but the mules

grumbling at the thunder—don't be afraid, we are quite awake, and Don Wollentia has all his pistols safe.

Val. Peace! some one approaches.

Enter hastily Don CALLANDA, *followed by Servants, &c.*

Cal. I think my fire must have reached him, and certainly this must be he with his arm bound.

[*Approaching* VALENTIA.

Val. You mistake your object, Sir.

Call. But I followed some one down the mountain into this very covert, and your being wounded, and in this particular spot, seems——

Val. Seems! indeed you judge too rashly; I have been robbed, as you, perhaps, have been; and not impossible,—perhaps the very same hand may have attacked both; however that may be, I struggled to defend myself, and thus received this wound.

Rod. And that's all true, as I hope to see my wife again.

Call. Well, Sir, I beg your pardon if I have unjustly accused you, but allow me to be fully convinced, by looking into this cottage, the entrance of which you appear to guard so very closely.

Val. Look there? no, no! my boy, perhaps, sleeps—you may disturb him—if the word of a gentleman is not sufficient, my arm, my honor, and my life shall protect the pass!

Call. Ah, indeed! so much ardour, and for a

boy! one might think there was a lady in the case; but, however—— [*Attempting to go.*

Rod. It is, indeed, a boy, upon my honor—you ought to believe two gentlemen.

Call. I will believe, only let me be assured, that I may not attack any other person unjustly, I will proceed very gently, I will not disturb him,

[*Attempting to go in.*

Val. Villain, stand off, or your life pays the forfeit! [VALENTIA *draws his sword.*

Call. I am loth to revenge, but thus called upon—— [CALLANDA *draws.*

[*The door of the Cottage hastily opens;* LEONORA *rushes between them,* VINCENT *clings to* VALENTIA.

Leon. Spare our deliverer! Save the preserver of my brother—Callanda, it is Leonora sues to you!

[*Throwing off her hat.*

Call. [*the sword falls from* CALLANDA'S *hand*] Leonora! blessed chance! unlooked for happiness! Mariana has informed me of all. Can you, Sir, forgive? Can I make any atonement?

[*Turning to* VALENTIA.

Val. I gave the offensive word; I crave your pardon, I solicit your friendship.

Call. And this lost treasure restored to our hopes! [*Embracing* VINCENT.

Vin. Yes, it is the good Valentia who has saved me!

Call. Sweet cherub! I am overpowered with gratitude to this gentleman, with surprise, with joy!

Rod. I can't help it, but I don't think I shall have an eye to see with, when I get home again.

Call. Leonora, I have most agreeable news for you respecting the Count.

Leon. Ah! do not flatter me.

Call. No, not for the world! You must preserve your disguise a little longer—we all shall very soon be in our proper places.

Rod. Ah! dear me, I think I see my wife again.

Vin. Do not cry, Roddy, you have not been so long lost as I have.

Enter hastily, SANDINO *and others.*

San. Good luck, your honor! I have had a fine gallop after you, for the old mule would not condescend to come down the mountain. [Sandino, *perceiving* VALENTIA *is extravagantly delighted*] By all the fish in the salt ocean, your honor, this is the very gentleman! Od's my life, my dear boy! how d'ye do? [*Hugging him.*

Val. Well met, my honest friend, well met!

Call. Well met, indeed! Fortune, Leonora, is showering her favours round us.

San. The paper is quite safe, my master understands it.

Val. We will talk of that hereafter, friend.

[*Moving to him to be silent.*

Call. I believe, Sir, I can be of great use to you in many respects.

[CALLANDA *and* VALENTIA *retire.*

San. [*approaching* LEONORA] Pray, Sir, can you tell me who this young master is?

Leon. Wait a little, my friend, and your master will inform you.

San. Does he belong to my friend there?

Vin. Do you mean me? I belong to the great and the good, and so do you.

[*Looking up to Heaven.*

Rod. Ah! there's the mystery.

CALLANDA *and* VALENTIA *coming forward.*

Call. Friends, we must now proceed in all haste —one short turn on the left of the mountain will bring us direct to the well-known inn of Casteretto, where our party is likely to be increased. Our mules are well laden.

Rod. Oh dear! I shall see my wife again.

Call. Valentia, you will guard Leonora, whilst I command my troops here. [*Moving.*

San. My dear boy, I will be your mule, and now you belong to me.

[*Hastily taking* VINCENT *in his arms.*

Vin. Take care then. [*A loud firing.*

Rod. Aye, pray don't go near the Johnnies— when I think of Miss Betsy Bull, I always begin to quake like an aspen leaf. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in an Inn; Count* OVIEDO *meeting* Lopez.

Oviedo. Have you seen nothing of Callanda and his train yet?

Lopez. No, your honor, I dare say they have been robbed, or murdered instead of us.

Oviedo. Good!

Lopez. Or, perhaps, as his honor is fond of a little argumentation, he stopped at the last post, to give the mules a lecture.

Oviedo. I cannot imagine how we could possibly miss each other.

Lopez. Nothing more easy, my lord, where there are so many cross roads—you took one turn, and he took another—thus it is with man, and wife, if they do not go hand, in hand, why then, your honor, they are sure to get wrong.

Oviedo. Apropos of that subject; what wouldst thou do, what would'st thou think, suppose thou wert going to be married to-morrow, that is to say, expected, invited, to be married?

Lopez. Think, my Lord? I think—indeed if that were my case, whether it is from living so long in your honor's service, for they say, like master like man, I think I should be inclined to look at the bottom of the ocean first.

Oviedo. This is much my way of considering the business.

Enter hastily CALLANDA.

Call. Have I at last overtaken you?

Oviedo. Thank kind fortune you are safe! but what has detained you so long?

Call. Verily, I believe, not less than fifty miraculous adventures—but I hasten to apprise you, that on entering this house I met an express from Don Sebastian — the whole family will meet us very speedily, they are not two miles distant.

Oviedo. Not two miles distant! distraction!

Call. What now?

Oviedo. Can he have received my letter of rejection which I sent not many hours ago?

Call. Of course, that is one reason of his travelling so fast; so now prepare yourself, Heaven knows with what temper of mind he may meet you. But possibly you regret that you wrote at all, and now wish to fulfil your engagement.

Oviedo. Yes, by taking to my heels.

Call. Pray what do you suppose will be the consequence of your conduct to Leonora?

Oviedo. Death, or a fever at least.

Call. And you feel no compunction for this diabolical conduct?

Oviedo. Patience, patience! Do I command, or even solicit, the ladies to love me?

Call. True, true—I had forgotten, it is that charming person of yours—it is nature we must condemn. [*Looking at him from head to foot.*

Oviedo. You never said any thing better in your *life, I* certainly am not to blame.

Call. You have no idea that the lady can possibly prefer any other?

Oviedo. Pshaw! you really grow quite an old woman.

Call. It may be so, and I have brought an old woman's story with me, that will not a little surprise you. In the first place to begin, the charming Leonora has really run away——

Oviedo. To meet me of course.

Call. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Oviedo. Why the man is mad!

Call. Don Sebastian is in pursuit, despairing and distracted, having as yet no tidings.

Oviedo. But hopes to find her in my arms?

Call. Ha, ha, ha! I presume you have heard of the house of Valentia?

Oviedo. Some years ago I was very intimate with the heir at law.

Call. Ha, ha, ha! There are several families of that name.

Oviedo. Will you be pleased to go on with your old woman's story.

Call. Certainly, certainly! Well, Leonora, in her flight to the Convent of La Guarda, where she intended to take the veil, to escape everlastingly a marriage with the Count Oviedo, accidentally met with this same Valentia; [OVIEDO *shrugs up his shoulders in unbelief*] he has twice rescued her from the hovering banditti at the risk of his life.

Oviedo. Poor fellow! I ought to thank him.

Call. And more than that, he has discovered, has saved her only brother, the long-lost hope of a glorious line of ancestors!

Oviedo. Ha, ha, ha! pray go on.

Call. You may very well imagine, that the amiable Leonora has, in consequence, become very much interested in the person to whom she and her family are so much obliged.

Oviedo. Gratitude, of course, for so many benefits.

Call. Added to this she returns to her father, bringing her brother in her hand, to solicit a recompense for the brave Valentia—the reward she intends him is her own incomparable self.

Oviedo. Excellent! excellent! Egad you shall write a second Don Quixote: pray go on.

Call. This young man, on returning from his native country was shipwrecked; he has also brought tidings of the family of the lord Alvarez. You may perhaps recollect, that Leonora was once betrothed to the son of the exiled lord, but as it has been presumed that he never will return to Spain—

Oviedo. As he died last year; young Valentia appears very opportunely to take the field, and de camp with the lady; why you have the merit of winding up a novel, without fatiguing one with half a dozen volumes.

Call. There still remains for one of the heroes of the romance another adventure—what do you say, then, to a rencontre with Don Sebastian, as he has received your letter, informing him that you decline fulfilling your engagement with his daughter?

Oviedo. I shall certainly return immediately, there is no occasion for me to proceed any farther.

[*Going.*

Call. Ha, ha, ha! what without the lady?—[*a noise without*]—Sure Don Sebastian is even now

arriving—[*more noise*]—what a confusion! it almost makes me tremble. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit hastily Count* OVIEDO *one way, Don* CALLANDA *another.*

SCENE III.—*Another Apartment at the Inn—Donna* SEBASTIAN *and* MARIANA *meeting.*

Donna Seb. Dear Mariana, I still tremble for the event—I begin to shudder at the very danger of the Count's situation, for after all, it is to him that we are the most obliged.

Mar. Yes, but the reason and eloquence of Callanda must prevail, besides, if they do draw swords on each other, we must step in between.

Donna Seb. Dear Leonora! had you trusted in Providence, flight, it is evident, had been quite unnecessary.

Mar. Believe me, it is all for the best, and a correction Don Sebastian most required; and now that we are assured from Callanda that she is safe.

[*Noise without.*

Donna Seb. I hear Don Sebastian in a great rage. Heaven preserve my child!

Enter Don SEBASTIAN, *Servant following.*

Don Seb. Where is the villain? where is the Count Oviedo?

Servant. He is this moment setting off, Sir.

Don Seb. Stop him, stop him, instantly, or your life pays the forfeit—deprived of both my children

—insulted and betrayed—I will tear him to atoms! Villain! villain! where is the Count Oviedo?

[*Stamping with rage.*

Enter hastily Count OVIEDO, CALLANDA *following.*

Oviedo. [*as he enters*] Who calls the Count Oviedo?

Don Seb. Draw, and give me the satisfaction of a gentleman!

Call. Hear me one moment, I entreat you, Sebastian, as a man of honor I beseech you hear me.

Don Seb. Quickly explain, what is it you would say? My rage knows no bounds!

Call. This gentleman feels the most sincere contrition, he is ready to fulfil his engagement, and to beg your pardon; he was not himself when he wrote that letter. Spare his life I beseech you!

[*Don* SEBASTIAN *draws.*

Don Seb. I receive no apology, I parley not with him who insults me: draw, Sir!

Call. Make a public example of him, only spare his life.

Don Seb. Draw, villain! Villain! do you hear that word?

Oviedo. Ha, villain! it is enough! have at you, then! [*They both draw.*

[CALLANDA *moves to one side of the Stage. Enter running the young* VINCENT *elegantly dressed; he throws himself on his knees before* SEBASTIAN; VALENTIA *follows in disguise —the sword falls from the hand of* SEBASTIAN — *Donna* SEBASTIAN *faints, and* MARIANA *supports her.*

Vin. Papa, papa! let this be a day of peace! I have at last found my dear papa! [*Clasping him.*

Don Seb. Oh! unlooked-for joy! Do I dream? A day of peace indeed! It is my long-lost boy, it is my Vincent!

Vin. Mama, mama! look up, my dear, dear mama!

Donna Seb. [*recovering*] It is, indeed, my Vincent! my long lost child, my Vincent!

[*Embracing him.*

Vin. It was that good gentleman, papa, [*pointing to* VALENTIA] who saved me from the gypsies, and they have almost killed him.

Don Seb. Oh! generous stranger! I want words now to express all I feel, but——

Donna Seb. Words are vain; when, where, how was it? what can we do to acknowledge?

Oviedo. [*apart*] I suppose I may now very quietly put up this little instrument.

[*Putting up his sword.*

Val. To be accessary to so much happiness, is more a cause of rejoicing to myself than can be supposed.

Donna Seb. Tell us, Callanda, all the story.

Call. This generous stranger, having been shipwrecked, was travelling towards his native place, was attacked by some of the gypsey tribe, and pursuing them into their deep retreats, he found him there, and rescued him at the peril of his life.

Donna Seb. Oh, Leonora! were you but here at this moment.

Don Seb. Am I, indeed, restored to one child, only to mourn the loss of another?

Call. To this same generous stranger, you are still more indebted, your daughter was on the point of taking refuge in a convent; on her way thither, she was preserved from many dangers by this protecting hand—she waits your forgiveness.

Donna and Don Seb. How shall we ever sufficiently reward you?

Call. Let Leonora name his reward.

[*Exit* CALLANDA.

Val. Generous friends, my reward is your happiness.

Re-enter CALLANDA, *leading in* LEONORA *elegantly attired.*

Leon. My father, have I your forgiveness? my mother, pardon——

[*Embracing Donna* SEBASTIAN.

Don. Seb. My injured child, forgive your father!

[*Embracing* LEONORA.

Mar. Oh! the wonder, I expected the wonder.

[MARIANA *embraces* LEONORA.

Val. Oh day that pays me for a world of suffering! [CALLANDA *and the* COUNT *converse.*

Don Sebas. Noble stranger! let me know your story, and if there be anything within the power of my fortune, that I promise!

Val. Alas! I fear to ask too much.

Don Seb. Impossible!

Val. But I am paid a thousand, and a thousand times! fortune has frowned, 'tis true——

Donna Seb. But if it is not painful to relate—

Don Seb. Let us hear to whom we are so much obliged.

Val. Courage, my heart! indeed, my friends, my case is one of every day. My father, suffice to say, was once the favourite of the state, and he had merit strong enough to raise him enemies in place; in times like these, his wisdom and his worth might have availed his country much, but domineering faction, as you know, had seized the helm, and party rage confounding all the plans of better policy, weak heads, with strong armed hands, perverting solid judgment's just decrees, he fell, that might have freed his country from the dominion of usurping foes, and he was banished, innocent of all offence — his undeserved misfortunes, proved my bane—I hence was banished from the very presence of her to whom I was betrothed; [*Don* SEBASTIAN *walks about in an agitated manner*] and in the impulse of despair, I bound myself to harshest slavery and toil, hoping, perhaps, the body's sufferings, might blunt the keener tortures of the mind!

[MARIANA *draws chairs,* LEONORA *sits.*

Oviedo. [*to* CALLANDRA] The supplement, eh?

Val. Fallacious hope! tho' my commander proved like the power with which he buffeted, a power that never yielded to distress, tho' storms beset us and war our course impeded, I only dreamt

of broken promises and faith betrayed! they called me valiant, for foremost still I pressed, wounds dealing, death hailing, death thirsting after! yet largely as he dealt his shafts around, still, still my course was spared; oh! wherefore, Heaven, I often would inquire—but I trespass on your patience.

Donna Seb. Proceed, I intreat you, Sir.

Val. We crossed the wide Atlantic—I escaped the fever in yon Western isles, which crops so many of our country's pride; and in returning to my native land, when all around me perished in the storm that wrecked our vessel, 'twas strange, I thought, that I was still preserved! was it to save your house, Sebastian? was it that that Supreme, that All-directing power had predetermined my revenge, and you the chastisement of mercy? He has, indeed, revenged! he has rewarded, the injured Alfonso Roderigo Valentia di Guadarama, lord of Alvarez! [VALENTIA *throws off his disguise, and appears splendidly drest*] Leonora, I can die content.

[LEONORA *faints*, MARIANA *supports her.*

Don Seb. Oh, hide me! spare me!

Donna Seb. Alfonso! dear Alfonso! Is it to the injured Alfonso, that I am indebted for the preservation of both my children?

[LEONORA *recovering.*

Vin. Yes, indeed, and indeed, mama!

Don Seb. Can you forgive the man who yet has never kneeled to any one on earth? [*kneeling*] Injured Alfonso, can you forgive me?

Alfonso Val. Rise, rise my lord, the past is now *forgotten.*

Leon. Oh! my father, what a day is this!

[*Don* SEBASTIAN *joins the hands of* ALFONSO *and* LEONORA.

Call. How do you like the old woman's story? [*to* OVIEDO] you see, you are of mighty importance to the piece.

Oviedo. Who is that pretty girl, who talks so gravely to my late intended?

Call. You are in love with her, I presume?

Oviedo. Rather she with me, by her side glances.

Call. What not yet corrected? ha, ha, ha! that lady and I are to be married to-morrow, and so now you may go back as you came, solus.

Oviedo. Ho, ho! is it so, Mr. Benedict? well, good bye to you, then; good bye, dear ladies.

OVIEDO *sings.*

Oh! when one love doth run away,
Doth run away, d'ye see,
There is another, there is another,
Another will have me!

I lost my heart with Miss Betsy Bull,
And fifteen stone weighed she,
And yet, all solid as she was,
She ran away from me!

I lost my heart, with a French ma'm'selle,
And four foot two was she;
I lost my heart, with a Spanish girl,
But it came back to me!

Oh! who would be the fool to grieve
For only one, d'ye see,
When there's a dozen poor damsels sighing,
Weeping, wailing, sighing,
Dying, dying all for me!

[*The Curtain falls, as Count* OVIEDO *is going out.*

THE END.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

WITH all due deference to that most sapient, and, certainly, most useful class of the literary world, the critics, the writers of reviews, &c., I have to observe, that, perhaps, there are few authors or artists, who on coolly considering any work they may have finished, cannot perceive its defects, equally with those whose occupation is criticism. Grant, indeed, that the genius of the artist is one thing, and the judgment of the critic another; yet nothing in this world is so easy, as to descry existing defect; it is true, too, that the will to perform is having only half the power to execute, and that in possessing the skill to take away a bad agent, we often want address to supply a better. Again, as every good action is susceptible of vicious interpretation, inspected through the microscopes of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," so will there be parts in the most brilliant works susceptible of the shafts of misrepresentation, ridicule, and condemnation :—

> The sun has specks, which every fool may see,
> Yet, in these seeking, he will dazzled be.

Sometimes a poor author flatters himself that the errors which he himself perceives, may escape the notice of others; this is, of all hopes, the most vain; he feels he is not expected to lay before the public an account of his own discrepancies; nevertheless he may be assured, that there is no chance of escape for him, but in the very nothingness of his performance—he has entered a field where there is no respect of persons, no extra complaisance towards the lady-candidates. For myself, screened in the panoply of my own conscious insignificance, I presume on escaping all fearful condemnation; unless, indeed, there should happen to be an unheard-of barren season in the land of letters, then, perhaps, for mere idle pastime, and in something like vexation of spirit that nothing better has blossomed on the bourn, they will run over the pages, and say of

KEEP YOUR TEMPER!

"The author of this Comedy, I suppose we must call it, has, at least, been very happy in the choice of a title to her work, and we hope she will keep her temper, whilst we condescend to make a few remarks on her Play, the end of which has certainly no correspondence with the beginning; we are led from the first presume a cor
quence from the sang ons of a v

ardent, and impassioned mind, entering with avidity the great world, of which it had formed to itself ideas, perhaps, of the most extravagant kind: but of the expected round, of the disappointments we had formed for, of the accomplishment of an anxious father's predictions, we find nothing: it is true that these predictions flow rather from the consciousness of guilt in the bosom of the parent, than the dread that usually attends evil deeds, of their punishment, than from a just apprehension of the dangers of the gay world—we suspect the author with the idea of manufacturing something of this sort, but getting frightened at the name, not knowing how to proceed, has left the projected volume, the last named, and wisely, as it is, to a common-place end of one sort. There is also an incident which seems a little irrelevant to the last letter, but which I certainly think is not connected literally with the second. In what subsequently undertakes to correct the history of his wife, by asserting his absence in another hemisphere, preserving unbroken the early vows which connected his heart to hers, and which [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

are lying about, tumbling down, and cracking off at every corner; it gave us some regret, too, to find the Bow Street officers called in amongst a party of happy young lovers, but she, no doubt, thinks prevention better than cure, and to guard a lady from being run away with, a more consistent measure than sending an armed force after the party, when, perhaps, eighty miles on the road to Gretna; and as after all these official gentlemen did not appear, being in previous requisition, we suppose we must not say any more on that subject—the servants are a very busy set of people, who pretend to have a great deal to do, whilst in reality they do nothing; this we will admit frequently occurs in great houses—two of them, we presume, are near relations, they appear to have precisely the same sort of tastes and habits, particularly that of making long speeches, nobody being present to hear them.

But let us proceed to the most remarkable part of this publication, the Introductory Discourse; the dead man's commendation of this comedy; surely this part of the story supersedes anything, and everything that ever came from the living; we do not pretend to say that such a letter never was received, but at the best, we can only call it an error of judgment; we are, however, completely shut out from all inquiry into the truth in this case, and certainly the author would have been equally safe with us, had the name of this complimentary

manager been given, so indisputable it is, that the grave is silent, that no reference can be taken in such a court, no cheat of this kind discovered, which, after all, is, as we have already said, a mere matter of opinion; the concluding part of the eulogium, no doubt the very best, is suppressed; this may be called a little affectation of modesty—we might as well have had the whole story, for availing ourselves of her own very a-propos simile, how should quacks sell their medicines, unless they can give us certain proofs that Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Black, &c., have swallowed their pills—we have not time to waste in continuing to point out a hundred other faults which we perceive; we will, therefore, take our leave of this article, by candidly saying that we do not think the reading of it will poison any body's mind, and if it is trash, it is not spun out into four long volumes; finally, whatever we chuse to say, the author seems determined to respect herself and her work, possibly on account of some motives which have led her to appear before the public, and with which she may think we have as little to do as she with the Reform Bill.

One word more; it is not by turning my own censurer that I politically presume to evade other critique; no! but severity itself must acknowledge, that to perceive one's defects, to be sensible of one's errors, to confess one's failings, are proofs of being

not altogether incorrigible; it is giving a hope of being more successful in future; verily, it is the first step on the high road to improvement!

OF

THE FATE OF IVAN.

The writer of an historical play, tho' he has his subject prepared for him, experiences, perhaps, more difficulty to perfect his work, than one who pourtrays from his imagination solely; or than one who draws from some ready-made romance. If he attach himself to the truth, in which the virtue of the historic page consists, he almost necessarily deviates from the rules prescribed to dramatic writers, and, consequently, may become defective in stage effect, in interest, and in execution. If, on the contrary, he here give the reins to his fancy, he may be stigmatized for his disregard of plain facts, and contempt of the supreme certainty of past positive existence. For my own part, I have adhered very closely to the plain matter of fact throughout; probably, because I found it most convenient—in one or two unimportant circumstances, I have deviated—as, for instance, I have sent Baron Korf to the fortress of Schusselberg with Prince Ivan, and thought I might allow him to die there,

for most authors say, it is very uncertain what did become of him; but from his very great age, it may be inferred that he did not long survive the revolution—with regard to the ignorance of Princess Dashkoff respecting Catharine's amours, it is well known that the Empress long succeeded in deceiving her nearest friends on these subjects, and that the Princess Dashkoff, tho' the principal actress in the revolution, tho', in every other respect, the confidante of Catharine, had not for a length of time any suspicion of the private intrigues of the court. The visit of the Czar to Prince Ivan, is treated almost verbatim, and the councils were called at Peterhoff in train as narrated.

The personages of the drama are more in number than necessary to the piece, as, however, those I have introduced were actual performers in the plots of the day, I was unwilling to deny them a place in the present representation.

OF

MISS BETSY BULL; OR, THE JOHNNIES IN SPAIN.

This little piece may, perhaps, be remarked for the very great rapidity of the incident, which does not allow the interest to pause for a moment. The third scene of the first act may be considered tame, but with spirited acting might not be tedious. The introduction of the gypsies accords well with the localities of Spain, that country being overrun with those wandering tribes.

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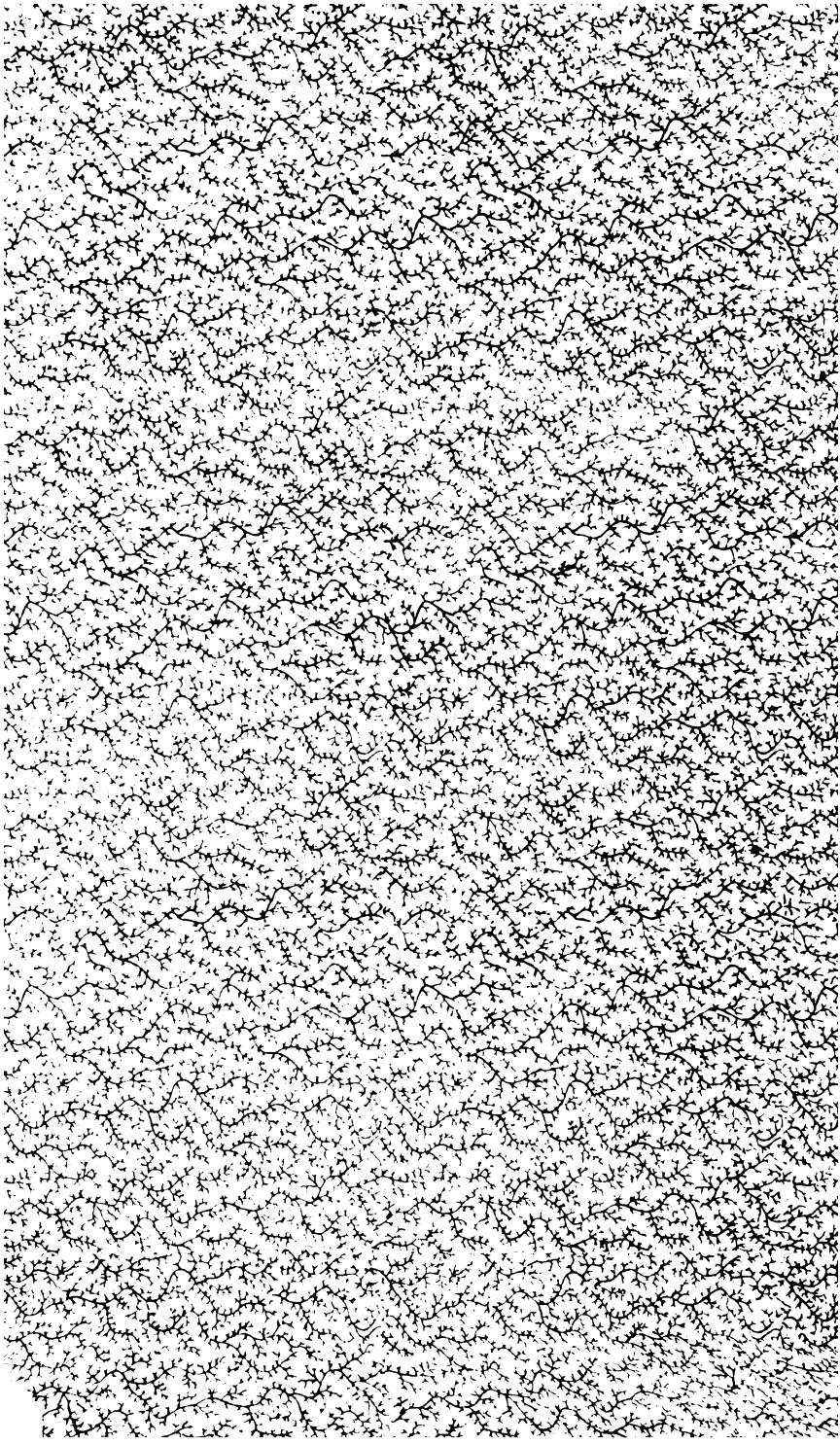
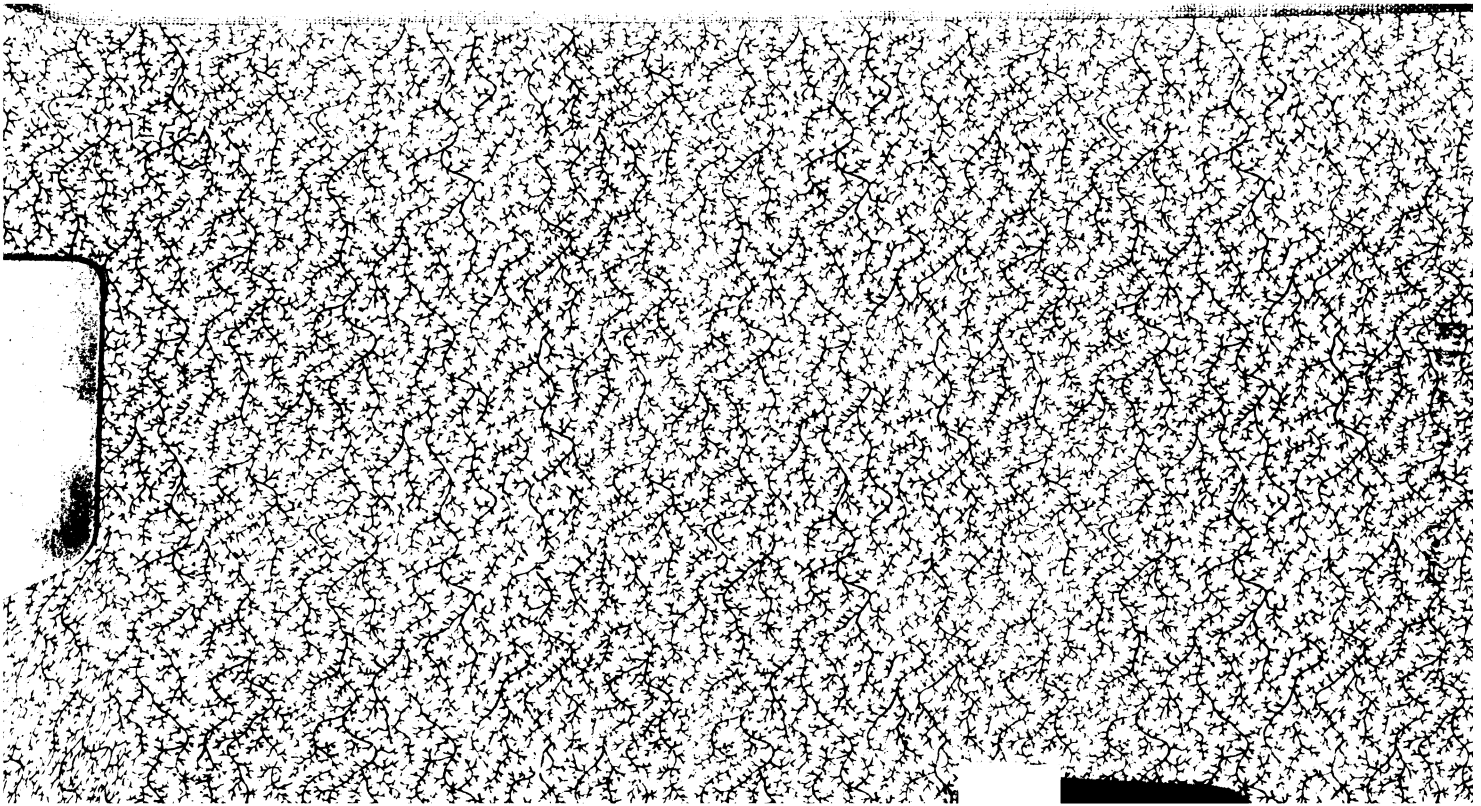
FINIS.

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